

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine contemporary Polish education in the context of socio-economic development. Among the topics treated are equal educational opportunity, the village school and the quality of vocational education. It is concluded that the Polish educational system has not kept pace with recent socio-economic changes. Finally, an assessment is made of the 1973 school reform and its attempt to remedy some of the shortcomings of the educational system.

RESUME

L'intention de cette étude est d'examiner les aspects actuels du système d'éducation polonais dans le contexte du développement socio-économique.

Parmi les sujets traités, il y a l'éducation pour tous, les écoles rurales et la qualité des écoles techniques.

Il a été démontré que le système d'éducation dans ce pays ressentait un ralentissement par rapport aux changements socio-économiques récents.

L'étude se termine en offrant une appréciation sur la tentative de réforme scolaire faite en 1973, pour remédier aux lacunes dans ce système.

EDUCATION AND SOCIETY IN POLAND
(1960-1973)

BY

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Following the political changes of December 1970¹ in Poland steps were taken to effect the nation's socio-economic development. Education was the first field to come under scrutiny. A Committee of Experts was appointed by the government to inquire into the state of education and to make recommendations for its improvement. The Committee concluded its inquiries in 1973 with a Report on the State of Education. In October 1973² an education law was enacted by the Sejm based on some of the Report's major recommendations. At this writing the reform has been partially implemented.

Scope and Purpose

The broad objective of this study will be an analysis of the educational system between 1960 and 1973 in the context of the socio-economic changes. The fact

1

Following the pre-Christmas labour unrest in Gdansk, Gierek became the First Secretary of the United Workers Party in Poland.

2

Sejm is the legislative body of the Polish government.

that the educational reform of 1973 coincided with widespread economic and social changes leads the author to the belief that the educational system was ill-adapted to the socio-economic needs of contemporary Poland. The study proposes to examine the disparities which arose between the objectives of the educational system in Poland and the general direction of the socio-economic development of the society at large. Among the major discrepancies are those dealing with the failure of education to respond to socio-economic demands, the inadequacy of the village school, and the lack of equal educational opportunity among the various social classes.

A Justification for the Study

There are two major reasons for this study. Firstly, the 1973 educational reform, in the author's opinion, is the most important educational reform in twentieth century Poland. Considering the importance of this reform and the fact that it has been little treated in the English educational literature, it is proposed that this inquiry be made. Secondly, it is suggested that the author is both interested and qualified to deal with the subject. The author received most of his formal education in Poland and is therefore equipped to read the documentary literature in Polish.

Organization of the Thesis

The study will have five chapters, the last of which will be a concluding chapter. The first chapter will offer an overview of Polish society, its political and socio-economic system, followed by an outline of the organization and structure of education. The second chapter will deal with the village school and its importance in Polish education. In addition, the demographic situation in the rural areas, the geographical distribution of village schools, the organization of the primary school and the quality of the teaching personnel will be treated. The third chapter will be devoted to the issue of educational opportunity, and shall examine the patterns of school selection, barriers to upward social mobility, with due attention being paid to the socio-economic, cultural and regional background of pupils and students under consideration. The fourth chapter will examine the educational and vocational preparedness of school leavers and the attitudes of Polish youth towards work and education. The anti-technological bias of the secondary general school (lyceum) will also be explained. Attention will also be devoted to the lack of coordination between industry and the school system, the uneven quality of the vocational preparedness for industry, the shortages of qualified manpower for agriculture, and lastly, the effect to which the degree of literacy has on productivity.

Survey of Literature

There are only a few works written in the English language dealing with contemporary Polish education. Of these two are doctoral theses: Jacqueline H. Brown's "The Polish General Secondary School 1961-1971"; and Marjory E. Searing's "Education and its Contribution to Economic Growth under Socialism: The Experience in Hungary and Poland".³ Brown's thesis examines the lyceum from its inception in the eighteenth century to the present. The main emphasis is on the 1960-71 period in terms of the changes which took place after the Reform Law of 1961 in the curriculum, teaching methods, social class composition of the student body, enrollment, school facilities and teaching personnel. Although Brown provides a thorough analysis of the organizational and educational aspects of the lyceum after the Reform Law of 1961, the author does not say, however, whether the changes of the 1961 law improved the quality of education, or whether the school became more democratic. Searing in her study concludes that a significant economic growth in Hungary and Poland resulted from the increase of both the size of the labour force and its level of formal education, as well as from the expansion of physical capital, rather than from

Brown, Jacqueline H., "The Polish General Secondary School 1961-1971", University of Pittsburgh, 1972.

Searing, Marjory E., "Education and its Contribution to Economic Growth under Socialism: The Experience in Hungary

better organization and production efficiency. Two other works devote a chapter to Polish education. Nigel Grant's book Society, Schools and Progress in Eastern Europe is by far the more informative one. The chapter devoted to Polish education deals mainly with its post World War II history, organization and structure. Sociologist Jan Szczepanski in Polish Society deals with education in more general terms and in the context of Poland's evolvement toward a "socialist" type of society. Although writing from a partisan position of the "socialist" society the author remains both judicious and open minded. Polish Society was written at the Centre of Advanced Studies of the Behavioural Sciences at Stanford University where the author was a Fellow.

One of the major primary sources used in this thesis was the Raport o Stanie Oswiaty w PRL (Report on the State of Education in People's Poland). The Report is a government sponsored study of the whole of education undertaken by twenty-four experts from various academic and economic fields under the chairmanship of Professor Jan Szczepanski. The Report, published in 1973, consists of five major chapters (approximately 500 pages) of which the second, "The

Present State of Education", and the third, "Recommendations on Improvement of Education", were particularly informative and useful.

A number of primary sources were obtained from the Polish Consulate in Montreal and the Polish Airline offices in Montreal, which deal with the shortcomings of the educational system in Poland in a fairly objective manner. These are Trybuna Ludu (the People's Tribune) daily, Zycie Warszawy (The Life of Warsaw) daily, Zycie Gospodarcze (Economic Review) weekly, Polska (Poland) monthly, Nowe Drogi (New Paths) monthly, and Problemy (Problems) monthly.

The monthly review of Polish books, the New Polish Publications was very useful in selecting the newest publications dealing with education in both the Polish and English languages which were subsequently ordered from Poland. Particularly useful were books written by these educationists: W.Ozga's Rozmieszczenie Szkol w Polsce (Distribution of Schools in Poland), and M.Pecherski's Problemy i Perspektywy Rozwoju Szkolnictwa w Polsce Ludowej (Problems and Prospects of the Development of the School System in People's Poland), and A.Swiecki's

Oswiata i Szkolnictwo w XXX-Leciu PRL (Thirty Years of Education and Enlightenment in Poland). The content of the twelve books ordered from Poland varies from solidly researched academic studies to works of propaganda, which have been eliminated for purposes of this inquiry.

Of considerable use were a number of Polish periodicals in their English editions, Polish Perspectives, Contemporary Poland, and the quarterly The Polish Review, all of which contain articles relevant to education, sociology and economics. The above mentioned publications are available in the Polish Library, Montreal.

Although there is an abundance of statistical information in the Polish primary sources and books, some discrepancies can be found between various authors. To reduce the discrepancies a method of averaging and comparison with other statistical data was used as well as the Polish statistical year books (Rocznik Statystyczny).

On the whole, there was sufficient material available in the above mentioned publications and

in the following bibliography to warrant the undertaking of the thesis.

CHAPTER II

THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM SINCE THE SECOND WORLD WAR

In 1918, after nearly 150 years of partition, the Polish state was re-established as a Second Republic. The Second Republic was a parliamentary democracy much on the lines of France's Third Republic. In 1926 Marshal Pilsudski staged a coup d'état which established a military dictatorship. This form of government endured until the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939.

In 1944, while the war was still being waged, the first democratic government, the PKWN (Polish Committee of National Liberation) was formed in Lublin in the eastern part of Poland which had already been liberated. The PKWN was a coalition government made up of the PPS (Polish Socialist Party), SL (Peasant Party), PPR (Polish Workers Party or the Communist Party) and the SD (Democratic Party). The coalition government (PKWN) issued a Manifesto in which it advocated the demo-

cratization of the country's social and political life, freedom to form labour unions and freedom of press and religion. The Manifesto also acknowledged the legal validity of the Constitution of March 17, 1921, and advocated a lasting alliance with the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia. It also called for economic cooperation and friendly relations with Britain, France and the United States.

Based on the provisions of the Yalta Conference of 1945, the coalition government (PKWN) was transformed into the Provisional Government of National Unity by the inclusion of a fifth party, the PSL (The Polish Peasant Party) led by the former Premier of the Polish emigree government in London. This government was recognized by the United States, Great Britain and other Western states. So ended the period of two Polish governments. The democratic coalition government held power for three years (1945-1948). These three years of fledgeling democracy in Poland were accompanied by a bitter underground struggle between the democratic forces in the government and the Polish Workers Party backed by the military and political strength of

the Soviet Union. During this struggle many liberal and socialist leaders were purged from the government and, in some cases imprisoned. Others had to flee to the West. On December 15, 1948, with the loss of its leaders, the Polish Socialist Party was coerced into joining the Polish Workers Party (the Communist Party). Thus ended the democratic coalition government and thus began the dictatorship of the Communist Party modelled on that of the Soviet Union. The years 1950-56 were characterized by the suppression of civil liberties in Poland, which were expressed in press censorship, persecution of the clergy and a ban on religious instruction in the schools.

The flagrant persecution of the Catholic Church during the Stalinist period only served to strengthen its socio-political position in a country where approximately 95 per cent of the population is of the Roman Catholic faith. With a large part of Poland's population still living in the countryside the Church draws its strength from the religious peasantry and so continues to preserve the Catholic cultural tradition. Village priests are still persons of influence in rural areas, giving both moral and political guidance to their

parishioners. Clerical strength may help to explain why Soviet style collectivization of farms never succeeded in Poland. It is worth noting that while both the Communist Party and the Catholic Church display nationalistic tendencies, each differs in its interpretation of national interest and the forms and character of social institutions. The government has learned to reckon with the political strength of the Catholic Church and has come to regard it as the unofficial opposition. The long strained relationship between church and state has lately been undergoing a process of normalization. In 1974 the government sought accomodation with the church and enlisted its support in effecting social and economic reforms and¹ by establishing diplomatic ties with the Vatican.

Poland has a population of 34 million of which more than one third live in rural areas. A relatively large percentage (26.2) of this population are children below the age of 15. Poland's population is, by and large, homogeneous; national minorities only amounting to 1.2 per cent of the total population. With a density of 105 inhabitants per square kilometer

¹ An unprecedented development among the communist states.

Poland ranks among the countries of medium density.

Administratively, the country is divided into 17 voivodships (provinces), which in turn are subdivided into smaller units powiats (counties). There are five large self-contained cities of the voivodship rank: Warsaw (population 1,317,000); Lodz (population 764,000); Cracow (population 590,000); Wroclaw (population 528,000); and Poznan (population 473,000). Poland has an industrial-agricultural economy. The chief mineral riches are coal, brown coal, natural gas, iron, copper, zinc and lead ores and sulphur.

Poland inherited a twofold legacy in education: high standards and well established traditions on the one hand; and much illiteracy and educational backwardness, especially in the countryside, on the other. Before the war, education was compulsory to the age of 14 but enforcement was lacking. As a result, in 1946, as many as 3 million inhabitants were illiterate, which constituted 18 per cent of the total population, exclusive of all children under the age of 10.²

2

Ministry of Education, Education in Poland (Warsaw, Ksiazka i Wiedza, 1974), p.48.

The devastation of the Second World War forced the country to start almost from scratch in rebuilding its educational system. More than 7,000 school buildings had been destroyed or damaged.³ The destructive effect of the war on the educational system was further compounded by the redefining of national boundaries and the resulting mass migration of refugees and others from east to west. The war claimed 30 per cent of Poland's teachers and 60 per cent of the country's school buildings. The universities in the large cities were almost totally destroyed.⁴ As a result the school system experienced a severe shortage of teachers during the first few years after the war. In 1946-47 alone there was a shortage of 13,000 teachers and of the 66,000 in service at that time over 12,000 lacked teaching qualifications. This meant unusually large classes or an estimated teacher pupil ratio of 1:65.⁵

At the first National Educational Congress held in Lodz in 1945 the Minister of Education recommended the establishment of a uniform school system comprising

³ Ibid., p.50.

⁴ Komitet Ekspertow, Raport o Stanie Oswiaty w PRL (Warszawa, Panstwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Maj 1973), p.87,88.

⁵ Ibid., p.88.

an eight-year primary school and a three-year secondary school. The main objective of the proposed new school system was the democratization of primary education by making it "uniform, free, run by the State and compulsory".⁶ It was also suggested that all youth who did not pursue full-time secondary schooling should be required to attend part-time trade schools till the age of 18.

In 1947-48 there were already 1,514 primary schools with eight grades but material difficulties and an acute shortage of teachers slowed the development of the universal eight-year school to a halt.⁷ In the "Instruction of the 1948-49 School Program" the Ministry of Education reduced the length of schooling at the primary level to seven years and extended the general secondary school (lyceum) to four years as opposed to the pre-war six-year general secondary education, which comprised the four-year gimnazjum (with a uniform curriculum), and the two-year lyceum (specializing in several areas).⁸ The reorganization of primary and secondary education

⁶ Ministry of Education, op.cit., p.50.

⁷ Komitet Ekspertow, op.cit., p.119.

⁸ Ministry of Education, op.cit., p.40.

resulted in a reduction of the number of years of schooling (from 13 to 11), and as a consequence⁹ supplied much-needed labour for the national economy. The seven-year primary school became the foundation for a large variety of two-year, three-year and four-year vocational school programs. In order to co-ordinate the expansion of the vocational school system a special government agency, the Central Office for Vocational Schools, was established in 1950. During the same year the government launched an anti-illiteracy campaign which was aimed at about 18 per cent of the total adult population. For a period of almost three years about 52,000 trained teachers and 26,000 volunteers were engaged in teaching primary school courses to adults. As a result of this campaign 618,298 persons obtained primary school certificates and others learned to read and write.¹⁰

The new Constitution of July 1952, which was passed by the Sejm (Parliament), reiterated the right of every citizen to education. Article 61 of the Constitution provides for:

⁹ _____
Komitet Ekspertow, op.cit., p.119.

¹⁰ Januszkiewicz, Franciszek, Education in Poland (Warsaw, Interpress Publishers, 1973), p.31.

- a) the creation of a universal, free and compulsory system of elementary education.
- b) the further expansion of general education secondary schools, vocational schools and institutions of higher learning.
- c) help by the State providing further education for working adults in town and country.
- d) the provision of basic assistance for students (scholarships, boarding schools, etc.).¹¹

The favourable development of the complete seven-year primary school prompted the Council of State in 1956 to decree that every child be obliged to complete primary education, instead of the hitherto obligation to attend the school.¹²

The increase in the number of schools and qualified teachers in the early 1960's brought about a new attempt by educational authorities to extend the primary school from seven to eight years. This step, said the authorities, would allow for the updating and expansion of the curriculum and would strengthen the role of the school in a child's upbringing. In 1961, the Sejm passed the Law on Development of the Educational System,

¹¹ Poland A Handbook (Warsaw, Interpress Publishers, 1974), p.321,322.

¹² Januszkiewicz, op.cit., p.25.

which extended primary schooling to eight years.¹³
 The implementation of the newly expanded curriculum in the eight-year primary school called for parallel curricular reforms in the four-year general secondary¹⁴ and vocational schools. Irrespective of the early inauguration (1962-63) of the above law it was not until 1967 that the first eight graders left the reformed primary school. The implementation of the law at the secondary level began in the school year of 1967-68, which meant that 1971 saw the first graduates some ten years after the proclamation of the¹⁵ Law of 1961.

Pre-school education is not compulsory in Poland. Kindergartens are run by civic centres, People's Councils, primary schools and Friends of Children Associations. The purpose of kindergartens is to prepare children for the primary schools. In 1972 there were 16,570 nursery schools and 9,302 kindergartens in Poland, the latter having an enrollment of 547,781. Although most kindergartens are publicly

¹³ _____
¹⁴ Ibid., p.25.

¹⁵ Some of the changes in the curriculum of the eight-year primary school are mentioned on pages 20 & 21.

Ministry of Education, op.cit., p.52.

operated by civic centres and People's Councils some 2,052 are organized by factories and 46 by Friends of Children Associations. In addition, 441 are attached to primary schools and 91 to schools for handicapped children.¹⁶ During the 1972-73 school year only 27.2 per cent of all children aged from 3 to 6 experienced pre-school education. Pre-school education is basically an urban phenomenon as 42 per cent of city children attend kindergarten as opposed to 13 per cent in the villages.¹⁷ In the villages nursery schools are open only in the summer so as to allow both parents to work on the farm. Such schools accept children between the ages of 2 and 10, but are, as a general rule, run by less than qualified personnel.¹⁸

Poland has a centralized system of education. The administrative structure of the Polish system resembles that of France in that the Minister of Education exercises his authority through Education departments in regional (wojowdztwo) and county (powiat) government bodies. The Ministry of Education super-

¹⁶ _____
Główny Urząd Statystyczny, Rocznik Statystyczny 1973 (Warszawa, Główny Urząd Statystyczny, 1973), p.496.

¹⁷ Ministry of Education, op.cit., p.175.

¹⁸ Ibid., p.175.

vises the primary and secondary schools as well as the vocational secondary schools, schools run by factories, guilds, municipal authorities and other ministries. The Minister of Education establishes curricula, approves text-books and teaching aids, issues instructions on the methods of teaching and sets rules for the running of schools, determines the size of the staff and approves the budget.

All primary and secondary schools are secular. Religious instruction was abolished in 1952-53 during the rule of the Stalinist faction of the Communist Party. However, religious instruction is available in churches during after school hours. At present religious instruction is a matter for home and church.

Children enter primary school at age 7 and are required to finish grade eight. If a student has not completed the eighth grade by the age of 15, the law extends compulsory attendance to the age of 17.¹⁹ The primary school curriculum is uniform across the country. The curriculum in the reformed eight-year primary school, by the Law of 1961, has been considerably expanded and shows a strong scientific and polytechnical bias. The number of hours devoted

to the natural sciences, physics and mathematics has been increased as well as polytechnical subjects having been added. In consequence, in grades 5-8, science and polytechnical subjects account for 49.2 per cent of the curriculum matter, and humanities for 37.7 per cent.²⁰

The new eight-year program also pays more attention to the aesthetic development of the child. Drawing has been extended to include art appreciation and singing extended to include music appreciation. The purpose of these changes has been to transform the subjects primarily involved with developing skills (singing and drawing) into subjects involving a certain amount of knowledge in the history and theory of art, teaching receptiveness and cultivating a sense of beauty. A complete novelty has been the introduction in grades seven and eight of civics which deals with the structure and responsibilities of administrative organs, jurisprudence, and current socio-economic and political issues.

A pupil having completed the eight-year primary

school, may, upon passing an entrance examination, continue his education in a four-year general secondary school (lyceum). The lyceum is one stage higher than the primary school and is intended, in principle, for students possessing above average learning abilities who plan to continue their education at the university. Although the emphasis in the lyceum is placed on the natural sciences, mathematics and the humanities, there are polytechnical and trade oriented subjects also being taught at the school. The polytechnical and trade oriented subjects, however, only serve as an introduction to further vocational education.

Upon completion of the final examination at the lyceum a student receives the secondary school leaving certificate (Matura) which entitles him to seek admission to institutions of higher learning. Those who do not intend to study at the university level need not take the final examination and are given a certificate of attendance.

Vocational education is divided into two types of schools: the technikum, providing full five-year secondary education ending in a secondary education

leaving certificate (Matura), which gives the bearer the right to sit for an entrance examination to university; and basic vocational schools which do not provide full secondary school education, but train tradesmen and workers.

Secondary vocational education is represented by two types of technika: one, based on the completion of the primary school, requires an entrance examination and five years of study; the other, based on the leaving certificate of the basic vocational school, requires three or four years of study. Both provide full secondary education, the title of technician, the Matura, and the right to sit the entrance examination to university. The majority of trades and technical specializations are taught in the two-stage vocational system of education (basic vocational school and technikum). However, there are a few professions which are taught only in the five-year vocational secondary school such as construction technician and nursing.

The two and three-year vocational and preparatory schools do not require an entrance examination, the completion of the eight-year primary school being

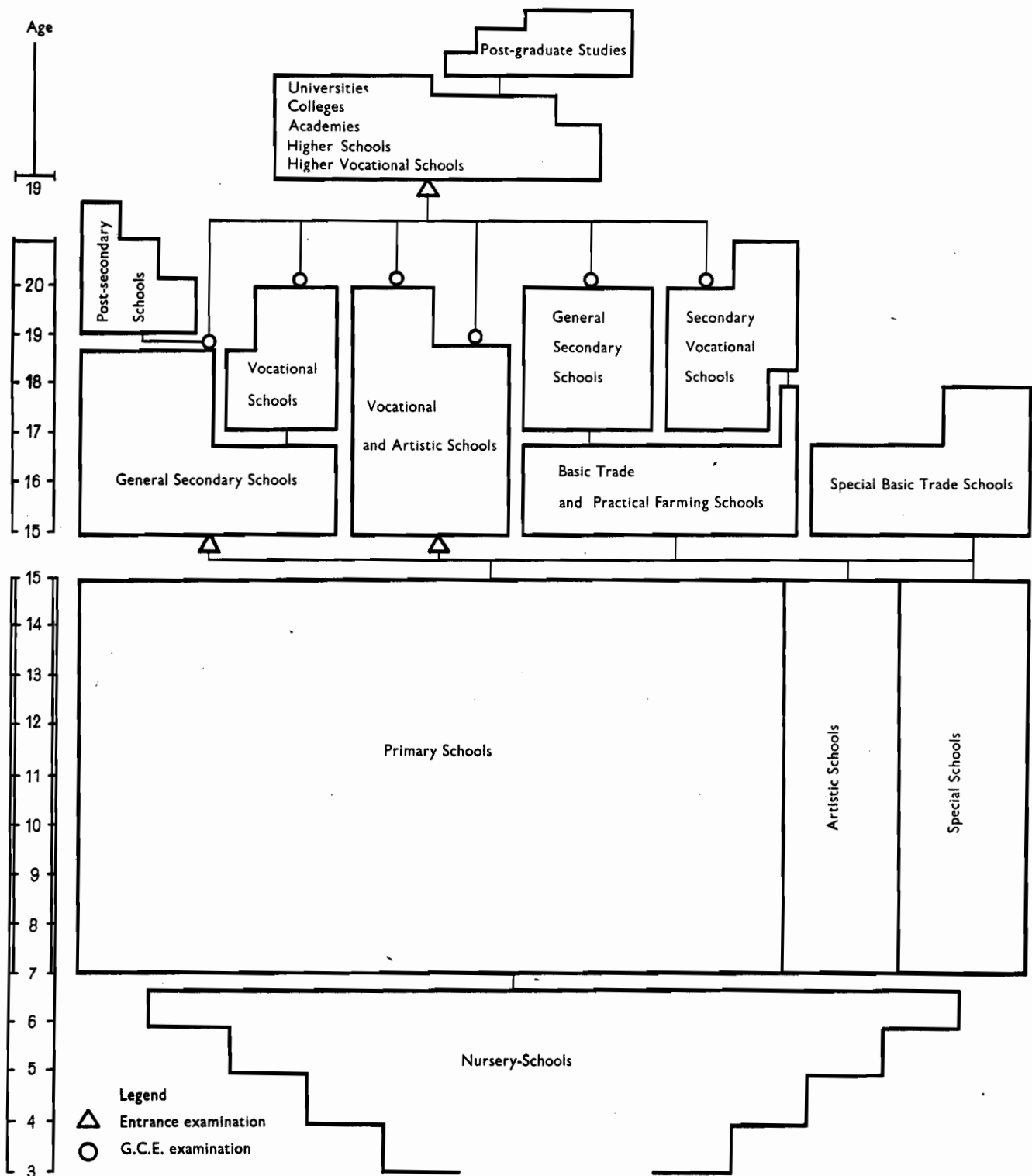
the only prerequisite. The zasadnicza szkola zawodowa (basic vocational school) comprises a variety of different specializations and trains skilled workers for construction, industry, communication and services. The szkola przysposobiona rolniczego (agricultural preparatory school) and the zasadnicza szkola rolnicza (basic agricultural school) train workers for agriculture and agricultural services. For those who aspire to continue their education after having completed the basic vocational school, there are three and four-year secondary vocational and three-year general secondary schools.²¹ (See Diagram Page 25).

The deterioration of the socio-economic situation in Poland in 1970, as reflected in workers' protests in Gdansk, brought to power the more pragmatic element of the PZPR (United Workers Party).²² The new leadership gave first priority to socio-economic matters, including that of education. In

²¹ _____
The description of the structure of the educational system on pages 21,22,23, and 24 is based on the following sources: Januszkiewicz, op.cit., p.31-40, Komitet Ekspertow, op.cit., p.119-128, Ministry of Education, op.cit., p.69-75.

²² Following the pre-Christmas labour unrest in Gdansk, Gierek became First Secretary of the ruling party, the United Workers Party, in Poland.

The school system in Poland 1972-73



Source: Ministry of Education, Education in Poland (Warsaw, Ksiazka i Wiedza, 1974), p.71.

1971 a Committee of Experts was appointed by the government to study the whole spectrum of education and to make recommendations for its improvement. After three years of investigation the Committee, comprising twenty-four experts from various academic and economic fields under the chairmanship of Professor Jan Szczepanski, produced the Raport o Stanie Oswiaty w PRL (Report on the State of Education in Poland). The Raport influenced by Soviet and East German models, recommended a ten-year universal school with three learning cycles in place of the present primary and secondary general schools. During the first cycle, grades 1-3, the emphasis would be on the three R's. The second cycle, embracing grades 4-8, calls for the systematic learning of languages (Polish, Russian and one of the western languages), algebra, geometry, history, civics, biology, chemistry, physics, art and music appreciation and polytechnical subjects. In the third cycle, grades 9-10, students will be channelled into four streams depending on their academic performance and future plans for study. These streams are: a) mathematics, physics, polytechnical; b) chemistry, biology, agricultural; c) socio-economic;

d) humanities, art, general culture.²³

Based on the Raport of the Committee of Experts the government passed a comprehensive school law in October 1973 which provided for the establishment of the ten-year universal school. The reform is scheduled to be implemented over a twelve-year period, from 1978-1990. The ten-year universal school will be preceded by three-year pre-school education. Both the kindergarten and the ten-year universal school will be compulsory and have a uniform program of education in villages and urban areas.²⁴ The present village primary school will be transformed into a ten-year universal school in two stages. During the first stage (1975-80) an eight-year gminna szkoła zbiorcza (consolidated rural school) will be established in every gmina.²⁵ By 1980-90 the consolidated rural schools will gradually be transformed into ten-year universal schools.

²³ Swiecki, Andrzej, Oswiata i Szkolnictwo w XXX Lecie PRL (Warszawa, Ksiazka i Wiedza, 1975), p.78.

²⁴ Kuberski, Jerzy, Aktualne i Perspektywiczne Problemy Polityki Oswiatowej (Warszawa, Ksiazka i Wiedza, 1974), p.313.

²⁵ The seat of the smallest administrative authority comprising approximately 12 villages.

CHAPTER III

THE VILLAGE SCHOOL

The acceleration of the country's socio-economic development brought into focus the unsatisfactory performance of the village school. The village school's particular importance lies in the fact that 47.7 per cent of the country's total population is still living in the countryside and consequently half of the youth attending primary school acquires its education there.¹ With half of the population living in the countryside the accelerated industrialization of Poland is to a large degree dependent on the continuous flow of a well-educated and trained labour force from villages to towns and cities. The problem with the village school, however, is that due to its present organizational weakness, shortage of well-qualified teaching staff, insufficient number of classrooms and resource areas, lack of teaching and learning aids, and uneven distribution throughout the country, it has been unable to provide the rural youth with a well-grounded eight-year primary education, which

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Główny Urząd Statystyczny, Rocznik Statystyczny 1973 (Warszawa, Główny Urząd Statystyczny, 1973), p.66, Tab.1 (32).

is the prerequisite for vocational preparatory schools for agriculture, trade and industry.

At present for every person employed in agriculture in Poland there are four who earn their living from other occupations; in Britain the ratio is 1:78, in the United States 1:61, in France and the German Federal Republic between 1:14 and 1:22.² The above comparison of Poland with the highly industrialized countries shows that Poland has a very large untapped manpower reserve in the rural areas the utilization of which is indispensable in the process of further industrialization.

During the last five years the migration from villages to towns and cities in pursuit of steady employment and better living conditions has involved 209,000 young people, resulting in a 49 per cent increase in the urban population between the ages of 18 and 24.³ Another feature of economic development in Poland is that industrialization is advancing at a much faster rate than urbanization, the result of

² Bozyk, Pawel, The Economy of Modern Poland (Warsaw, Interpress Publishers, 1975), p.28.

³ Polska Agencja Interpress, "Youth: Poland's Great Problem", Contemporary Poland (Warsaw, Polish Interpress Agency, Vol.6, Feb.1972), p.12.

which is that a substantial percentage (39.7) of the total rural population already earns its living in industry and other non-agricultural occupations while at the same time retaining ownership⁴ of its farms and managing them on a part-time basis.

So far the countryside has been contributing to the national labour market a labour force with no particular occupational skills. Although some inhabitants of the villages migrate permanently to towns in pursuit of steady employment the majority of them shuttles back and forth between town and village. The latter group of peasant workers or the bi-occupational labour force is growing at a considerable rate. Between 1960 and 1970 the percentage of small farm owners who derived their livelihood from non-agricultural occupations rose from 22.6 per cent to 35 per cent.⁵ The extent to which this largely untrained labour force is involved in the national economy is reflected in the fact that this group produces⁶ 25 per cent to 28 per cent of the national income.

⁴ Kolbusz, Franciszek, "Chlopo-Robotnicy", Nowe Drogi, Monthly (Warszawa, No.8, 1973), p.8.

⁵ "Adaptation and Training", Polish Perspectives, Monthly (Warsaw, Prasa-Ksiazka-Ruch, Vol.14, No.12, Dec.1973), p.34.

⁶ Ibid., p.34.

This new social phenomenon in Poland is perhaps due not only to the relatively slow development of housing facilities but also to the fact that new industrial centres are being built in predominantly rural areas either because of new mineral discoveries (regions of Konin, Tarnobrzeg, Turoszow) or by deliberate state policy to create job opportunities in the industrially underdeveloped regions of Poland (Nowa Huta, Pulawy).⁷

Demographic prognostics emphasize even further the importance of the village school. The numerical differences between primary school attendance in the rural areas and in towns and cities will be progressively widened as a result of a faster declining birthrate in the urban centres. The birthrates at the beginning of the 1970's were 8.3 in villages as against 5.2 in towns and cities per 1,000 inhabitants, which according to demographic calculations makes the village primary school population much larger.⁸ Indeed, by 1980 it is predicted that there will be 4.2 per cent more children attending primary schools

⁷ "The National Economy", Poland (Warsaw, Interpress Publishers, 1974), pp.221,260.

⁸ Kozakiewicz, Mikolaj, "New Village School", Polish Perspectives, Monthly (Warszawa, Prasa-Ksiazka-Ruch, Vol.XVI, No.5, May 1973), p.35.

in villages than in towns and cities; by 1990, 18.9 per cent; and by 2000, 29.6 per cent in favour of the rural areas.⁹ (See Table No.1).

If the inversely proportionate birthrate between the rural areas and the urban centres holds true, the rural areas of Poland will become the main reservoir of labour and personnel for the state-run industries, services and institutions. It goes without saying that the rapid industrialization and modernization of the economy will require highly specialized labour, for without an influx of a young and highly skilled labour force from the rural areas Polish towns would be faced with an employment crisis in the decades ahead.¹⁰

It is therefore surprising that the government having knowledge of the economic importance of the village youth in future industrial development and modernization of agriculture, has not done more to improve the academic quality of the rural primary school. A prominent psychologist, Mikolaj Kozakiewicz, warns of the educational consequences of disparities between the urban primary school and its

⁹ Ozga, Wladyslaw, Rozmieszczenie Szkol w Polsce (Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Szkolne i Pedagogiczne, 1974), p.303.

¹⁰ Kozakiewicz, op.cit., p.34-35.

TABLE I

PREDICTED NUMBERS OF CHILDREN AGED 7-14 IN RURAL
AND URBAN AREAS FROM 1975-2000 (in thousands)

Year	Urban Areas	Rural Areas	Difference in favour of rural areas
1970	2370,6	2682,1	311,5
1975	1918,0	2291,4	373,4
1980	1894,5	2255,4	360,9
1985	2051,2	2503,7	452,5
1990	1936,8	2698,8	762,0
1995	1701,5	2676,2	975,3
2000	1507,7	2499,9	992,2

Source: Wladyslaw Ozga, Rozmieszczenie Szkol w
Polsce (Warszawa, Wydawnictwa Szkolne
i Pedagogiczne, 1974), p.303.

village counterpart:

The educational disproportion between town and country not only lowers the standards of education at present but in 10 to 15 years time will, unless removed, start to effect the whole national economy.¹¹

This quotation acquires new perspective if we bear in mind that in the near future 60 per cent of all children will be attending primary schools in the rural areas, then "it will not be too far fetched a statement that the future of education will be decided in the country school".¹²

In order to comprehend fully why the village primary school has been singled out, among other problems in Polish education, by the Committee of Experts for Educational Reform, one has to examine the pre-school institutions, the primary school's geographical distribution, its organization, the quality of its teachers and parent-school relations.

According to the decree of April 8, 1961 of the Ministry of Education, a school network was to be set

¹¹ Kozakiewicz, Mikolaj, "Problems of Education", Polish Perspectives, Monthly (Warszawa, Prasa-Ksiazka-Ruch, Vol.XV, No.10, Oct.1972), p.42.

¹² Kuberski, Jerzy, Aktualne i Perspektywiczne Problemy Polityki Oswiatowej (Warszawa, Ksiazka i Wiedza, 1974), p.12.

up throughout the entire country providing for an incomplete primary school (grades 1-4) within 3km. distance of every pupil's residence, and the remaining grades (5-8) of the primary school were to be no further than 4km.¹³ This provision had still not been met by the 1966-67 school year as 62,000 pupils in the countryside lived further than the stipulated distance. The situation varied from one administrative region to another. In the Koszalin region the percentage of children who had to cover on foot a distance further than that decreed was the highest, 6.6 per cent; in the Olsztyn region 4.6 per cent; the Bydgoszcz region 3.8 per cent and the Warsaw region 2.4 per cent.¹⁴ Notwithstanding the fact that a fair number of those living further than the prescribed distance was using public transportation, while others were living in boarding houses and dormitories, there still remained 32,000 children who had to cover on foot daily distances exceeding 7km. to reach the nearest school.¹⁵ Some educationists believe that a daily march of 7 to 9km. is not conducive to good health and may be a contributing

¹³ Ministerstwo Oswiaty, Dziennik Urzędowy Ministerstwa Oswiaty (Bulletin of the Ministry of Education, Warszawa, Ministerstwo Oswiaty, 1961), paragraph 43.

¹⁴ Ozga, op.cit., p.122.

¹⁵ Ibid., p.122.

factor to poor academic performance.¹⁶

The repetition of the school year is especially noticeable among younger pupils of the village primary school (grades 1-4) as compared to repeaters in the cities. For example, during the 1970-71 school year 2.6 per cent of the pupils, or a total of 6,684, repeated the first grade of primary school in the cities, whereas in the village primary school the percentage of first grade repeaters was 14.4, or 13,222 pupils.* (See Table No.2). In this respect the uneven geographical distribution of village primary schools throughout the countryside, insufficient bursaries and lack of transportation facilities, serve to discriminate against rural youth, forcing some of the children to terminate their schooling at the incomplete level, thereby severely limiting their social progress.

One of the main factors contributing to the organizational weakness of the incomplete primary school (grades 1-4) stems from the fact that it is

¹⁶ Ibid., p.122.

* For further details on school repeaters see Table No.3 on p.40.

TABLE 2
PERCENTAGE OF PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS REPEATING GRADES
IN YEARS 1955/56 - 1970/71

	Year	Total	Grades							
			I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
Urban Areas	1955/56	7.7	4.2	4.9	5.7	11.2	12.7	11.7	7.4	-
	1960/61	7.6	4.7	5.8	6.4	9.2	11.7	10.2	5.6	-
	1965/66	4.8	2.7	3.4	4.0	5.3	7.9	6.8	2.6	-
	1970/71	4.6	2.6	3.3	3.6	5.0	7.3	6.4	5.6	1.9
Rural Areas	1955/56	9.3	8.2	7.9	7.3	12.4	12.6	11.1	6.4	-
	1960/61	9.7	9.2	9.2	8.6	12.1	12.6	10.3	4.3	-
	1965/66	6.1	5.0	5.5	5.3	3.6	9.7	7.7	2.1	-
	1970/71	5.7	4.4	5.1	5.2	5.8	9.4	7.4	6.2	1.5
In Absolute Numbers										
Urban Areas	1960/61	167384	16251	19651	21394	30288	37246	29213	13341	-
	1965/66	118577	9319	12042	14353	19523	29883	24852	8605	-
	1970/71	116526	6684	8752	10317	15188	25326	23497	20399	6363
Rural Areas	1960/61	255392	37874	38641	35225	49602	48598	34105	11347	-
	1965/66	164050	19165	21873	20680	27398	38406	29436	7092	-
	1970/71	156097	13222	15925	17110	20052	34762	27516	22544	4966

Source: Mieczysław Pecherski, Problemy i Perspektywy Rozwoju Szkolnictwa w Polsce Ludowej (Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1973), pp.215,217.

attended by a relatively small number of pupils. As a result the schools are staffed usually by less than three teachers, who have to combine two or three different grades in order to accommodate all the students in a limited class space. As a rule these small schools, comprising two or three classrooms, do not have the class space, curriculum offerings and teaching aids of their urban counterpart.

Further, the Minister of Education, Jerzy Kuberski, has said that schools staffed with less than five teachers are unable to take full advantage of the subject matter specialization of teachers. Moreover, the organization of such schools is not conducive to the full implementation of the teaching program at primary level.¹⁷ As explained by one pedagogue:

There is no doubt that with small exceptions of highly talented and motivated teachers the educational level of larger schools, better organized with large numbers of pupils and subject specialists, is much higher than the educational level of smaller schools with fewer pupils and teachers, who out of

¹⁷ _____
Kuberski, op.cit., p.137.

necessity teach several subjects
requiring different preparation.¹⁸

Of 21,655 schools during 1971-72 approximately 27 per cent had an attendance of 40 pupils each, 20 per cent of 41-100 pupils each, 37 per cent of 101-200 pupils each and 16 per cent were attended by over 200 pupils.¹⁹ Furthermore, from the evidence in Table No.3, which gives the number of schools staffed with from one to eight teachers and more, it may be concluded that 31.1 per cent of the village primary schools were staffed only by one or two teachers and 20 per cent had three to five teachers, which indicates that more than half of all pupils in the rural areas were taught at some time in joint classes, during which one teacher taught simultaneously at two grade levels. This form of organization, especially in the incomplete primary schools (grades 1-4) is thought to have an adverse effect on the child's current and future academic performance.²⁰ Ozga maintains that only rural primary schools staffed with at least six teachers compare favourably in organ-

¹⁸ Jablonski, H., "Szkolnictwo w Obliczu Nowego Planu Pięcioletniego", Gospodarka i Administracja Terenowa, Monthly (Warszawa, No.9, 1970), p.1.

¹⁹ Kuberski, op.cit., p.136.

²⁰ Ozga, op.cit., p.124.

TABLE 3

PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN POLAND ACCORDING TO THE
SIZE OF THEIR STAFF

Number of Teachers Per School											
TEACHERS	-	In	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8+	Total
		Rural									
		Areas									
SCHOOLS	-		5706	1215	159	2303	1949	6279	618	3994	22223
TEACHERS	-	In	From 1-7 Teachers							8+	Total
		Urban									
		Areas									
SCHOOLS	-			182						3976	4158

Source: Wladyslaw Ozga, Rozmieszczenie Szkol w Polsce (Warszawa, Wydawnictwa Szkolne i Pedagogiczne), p.364.

ization and effectiveness to their urban counterparts.²¹
 The inability of the village school, staffed with five or less teachers, to provide a viable education is also attributed, among other things, to the heavier²² teaching load given to teachers in such schools.
 (See Table No.4).

The teacher problem in the rural schools has been aggravated by the steadily declining birthrate since the 1960's.²³ Although it is generally conceded that primary schools staffed with seven or more teachers are more satisfactory in curricular terms, the regional departments of education on the wojewodztwo (province in administrative terms) administrative level, in order to offset the decline in birthrate, reduced the number of schools staffed with six and seven teachers by 485 and 735, respectively, and increased by 165 the number of schools staffed with five teachers.²⁴ (See Table No.5).

A well known Polish pedagogue, Professor M.Falski,

²¹ Ibid., p.107.

²² Ibid., p.107.

²³ Cichy, Boguslaw, "Siec Organizacyjna Szkol Podstawowych w Latach 1971-75", Nowa Szkola, Monthly (Warszawa, No.3, 1972), p.10.

²⁴ Ozga, op.cit., p.125.

TABLE 4
THE TEACHING LOAD IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS STAFFED
WITH 1-7 TEACHERS

Number of Teachers	Weekly Teaching Load
7	179 teaching hours
6	175 teaching hours
5	155 teaching hours
4	135 teaching hours
3	102 teaching hours
2	73 teaching hours

Source: Wladyslaw Ozga, Rozmieszczenie Szkol w Polsce (Warszawa, Wydawnictwa Szkolne i Pedagogiczne, 1974), p.107.

TABLE 5

PLANNED CHANGES IN THE STRUCTURE OF THE NETWORK
OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN YEARS 1971-75

Organizational level of schools (number of teachers)	Number of Schools in						Increase (+) or decrease (-) in 1971-75 in relation to 1970
	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	
Total Schools	26126	25729	25426	25180	24940	24821	-1305
Schools with 1 teacher	5788	5734	5717	5715	5716	5691	- 97
Schools with 2 teachers	1077	964	927	910	903	923	- 154
Schools with 3 teachers	149	125	113	110	105	111	- 38
Schools with 4 teachers	2492	2682	2699	2689	2732	2669	+ 167
Schools with 5 teachers	2009	2093	2093	2123	2078	2036	+ 26
Schools with 6 teachers	6280	6222	6118	5931	5851	5795	- 485
Schools with 7 teachers & more	8331	7909	7813	7702	7605	7596	- 735

Source: Wladyslaw Ozga, Rozmieszczenie Szkol w Polsce (Warszawa, Wydawnictwa Szkolne i Pedagogiczne, 1974), p.125.

contends that "the shortcomings in the organization of the schools are partly responsible for the ineffective teaching", and might be one of the reasons for pupils dropping out of rural primary schools before completing their education. To support his point, Falski points out that the provinces having the highest percentage of incomplete primary schools also have the highest proportion of drop-outs. This²⁵ is illustrated in the diagram below.

Province	Percentage of incomplete primary schools	Percentage of drop-outs
KOSZALIN	50.8	22
OLSZTYN	46.7	26
SZCZECIN	40	17
BIALYSTOK	35.7	17.7

And conversely in provinces where the percentage of incomplete primary schools is lower the drop-out rate is correspondingly lower.

KATOWICE	11	9.1
KRAKOW	17.6	10.1
RZESZOW	26.5	9.2

²⁵ Pecherski, Mieczyslaw, Problemy i Perspektywy Rozwoju Szkolnictwa w Polsce Ludowej (Warszawa, Ksiazka i Wiedza, 1973), p.206.

The problem of drop-outs among pupils who attend incomplete primary schools, when broken down to city and village, points out again the disadvantageous position of the village child. While in towns and cities in 1959-60 there was only 2.2 per cent incomplete primary schools attended by 0.08 per cent first graders, in villages, on account of smaller numbers of pupils, there was 35.3 per cent incomplete primary schools attended by 17 per cent first graders. This large disproportion between city and village may be one of the reasons why the drop-out rate is six times higher in village primary schools.²⁶

Falski argues further that the main reason for the educational disparity between the primary schools in town and village is attributed to the organizational and geographical differences of those schools:

Such disparity cannot be explained by differences of intellectual ability nor can it be by cultural environment of the city or village. The essential factor is attributed by some to organizational and geographical differences between urban and rural primary schools with which are connected the degree of involvement of the teaching personnel and effectiveness of teaching.²⁷

²⁶ Falski, Marian, Problematyka Organizacyjna Szkol
Szczególnie Średnich (Wrocław, Ossolineum, 1966), p.153.

²⁷ Ibid., p.153.

The high percentage of drop-outs in the village primary schools has not improved substantially over the last decade (1960-70). In 1960-61, of the total number of drop-outs from primary school 81 per cent had attended rural schools. Ten years later village youth still accounted for 70 per cent of the total drop-out rate.²⁸ (See Table No.6).

Since the Second World War there has been a shortage of teachers, especially in the rural areas. To meet the crisis the educational authorities were forced to simplify and shorten the training program for teachers. Graduates of secondary schools, upon passing several pedagogical courses, were sent to teach in primary schools. The situation changed only in 1954 when a teacher destined for primary school had to undergo a two-year teacher training program.²⁹

The facility with which one was able to become a primary school teacher, coupled with a relatively low salary as compared with workers and other employees of the nationalized economy, resulted in the deterioration of the social prestige of the

²⁸ Pecherski, op.cit., p.197.

²⁹ Kuberski, op.cit., p.205.

TABLE 6

NUMBERS OF SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN WHO DID NOT COMPLETE
PRIMARY SCHOOL DURING YEARS 1960/61-1970/71

Year	Total	Aged from 7-14	Aged from 15-16	In cities	In villages
1960/61	54,035	17,141*	36,894**	10,018	44,017
1965/66	27,347	13,141*	14,206**	7,723	19,624
1969/70	32,479	13,432	19,047	9,440	23,039
1970/71	28,769	13,117	15,652	8,394	20,375
* children aged 7-13					
** children aged 14-15					

Source: Rocznik Statystyczny Szkolnictwa 1970/71 (Warszawa, Panstwowe
Wydawnictwo Szkolne, 1971), p.6.

teaching profession. Consequently, a large number of well qualified teachers have left teaching in pursuit of other occupations offering a higher salary. Between 1952 and 1964, 42,000 teachers, of whom 77 per cent were under the age of 35, from village and city primary and secondary schools, left the profession.³⁰

However, the most serious problem at the present is the unwillingness of highly qualified teachers with a subject specialization to teach in the rural schools. Since all primary schools in Poland are part of the national system of education and have a uniform educational program, they are expected to follow the Ministry of Education's decrees, irrespective of whether they are located in villages or cities.

While the urban primary schools have no difficulty in complying with the Ministry's decree calling for a minimum of four teachers in every primary school with subject specialization (Polish and Russian languages, mathematics and practical work), the village school must content itself with teachers having lesser³¹ qualifications.

In spite of the fact that by the year 1967, 51.7 per cent of all teachers in Poland

³⁰ Ozga, op.cit., p.273.

³¹ Ibid., p.113.

acquired subject specializations, there were still 2,683 primary schools (which amounted to 14 per cent of all rural schools) which did not have a single subject specialist.³² Even more disturbing is the fact that 7,200 primary schools, which comprised 39 per cent of all rural schools, did not have a teacher specializing in a subject as basic as the Polish language and there was a smaller number of teachers who had no pedagogical qualifications whatsoever.³³ (See Table No.7). It therefore is evident that an anti-rural bias exists among the teachers with higher pedagogical qualifications.

Even more difficult is the problem of trained administrative staff, as the chairman of the Committee of Experts for Educational Reform, and President of the Polish Academy of Sciences, J.Szczepanski, points out:

It's really too bad that no one has thought of training managerial staff for schools. They learn the ropes as they go along, quite haphazardly, by the crudest method known in the his-

³² Ibid., p.115

³³ Ibid., p.115,282,284.

TABLE 7

THE EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF TEACHERS IN YEARS 1966/67 AND 1967/68

Type of education	1966/67		1967/68	
	Number of teachers	%	Number of teachers	%
University	45469	15.6	47444	15.6
Teachers college	108279	37.5	128140	42.1
Secondary pedagogical	122639	42.3	119717	39.3
Secondary general or vocational	7685	2.7	5594	1.8
No secondary education	5416	1.9	3738	1.2
Total	289488	100.0	304633	100.0

Source: Wladyslaw Ozga, Rozmieszczenie Szkol w Polsce (Warszawa, Wydawnictwa Szkolne i Pedagogiczne, 1974), p.282.

tory of human work. And so they are inclined to repeat rather than innovate.³⁴

This statement is further emphasized by the fact that 34 per cent of village primary schools in 1967 were run by principals whose pedagogical preparation was equivalent to secondary school graduation or to the Lyceum Pedagogiczne.³⁵ Although this situation has shown considerable improvement over the last few years, nevertheless, in 1973 there was still a shortage of 2,000 university qualified principals in the village primary schools with adequate teaching experience.³⁶ At the same time the Committee of Experts for Educational Reform emphasized the fact that in addition to principals some 200,000 teachers employed in the primary and secondary schools should be sent to the universities to upgrade their qualifications.³⁷ This recommendation, however, begs the

³⁴ _____
Szczepanski, Jan, "The New Shape of Education", Polish Perspectives, Monthly (Warszawa, Prasa-Ksiazka-Ruch, Vol.XVI, No.6, June 1973), p.21.

³⁵ Ozga, op.cit., p.115. Lyceum Pedagogiczne was a five-year teachers' training school at the secondary education level, which trained teachers for grades 1-4 of the primary school.

³⁶ Kozakiewicz, op.cit., p.38.

³⁷ Komitet Ekspertow, Raport o Stanie Oswiaty w PRL (Warszawa, Panstwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1973), p.174.

question since it is known that teachers with university degrees and long teaching experience are not attracted to teaching positions in the rural areas.

The quality and effectiveness of the rural school have long been a source of concern. Some see the present plight of the village primary school in more opinionated terms than others. Psychologist Kozakiewicz, referring to independently conducted studies, says that in spite of the country's centralized system of education which imposes a uniform program of education across the country, those who attended rural schools and who followed the same curriculum from the same textbooks "acquired little more than half of the knowledge and abilities of their urban counterparts".³⁸ Kozakiewicz's statement may be made more for effect than for accuracy.

The ineffectiveness of the rural primary school may also be attributed to the lack of pre-school facilities (nursery schools, kindergartens, etc.). The Minister of Education points out that virtually

38

Kozakiewicz, Mikolaj, "Higher Education: Quantity into Quality", Polish Perspectives, Monthly (Warszawa, Prasa-Ksiazka-Ruch, Vol.XV, No.2, Feb.1972), p.17.

every second child in urban areas attends pre-school education, while in the countryside only one in ten does.³⁹ Consequently, in comparison with urban children the majority of children of peasant and working-class background living in rural areas begin their educational career in a disadvantaged position.

Tests show that children who attend kindergarten show greater learning abilities in grades 1 to 4 than those who do not go to kindergarten.⁴⁰ The percentage of children aged 3 to 6 who do not attend any kind of pre-school education in Poland is 63.9, whereas in France the figure is only 25.1 per cent and in Belgium⁴¹ 4.5 per cent.

The problem of increasing pre-school facilities in rural Poland might prove difficult owing to the fact that there is a lack of trained kindergarten staff and an unwillingness among those who do have the necessary qualifications to settle and teach in rural areas. Moreover, there are no buildings available for use as kindergartens. Also, the inhabitants

³⁹ Kuberski, Jerzy, "Oswiata Otwarta", Polityka, Weekly (Warszawa, No.30 (803), 22.VII.1972), pp.1 and 5.

⁴⁰ Komitet Ekspertow, op.cit., p.95.

⁴¹ Ibid., p.95.

of rural areas are often unaware of services such as kindergartens and therefore do not demand them. The few existing kindergartens in rural areas are usually provided by the state for state farm employees who account for only 20 per cent of all farmers in Poland.

All this is to emphasize the important but unsatisfactory state of rural schools in Poland. As the Minister of Education says, "The weakest cog in our educational system is the village primary school which does not fully realize its teaching program, but almost 60 per cent of the Polish youth begins its⁴² education here".

As we have seen, there are several reasons for this situation. The fundamental drawback as regards organization of the eight-year village primary school has been its division into the incomplete school (grades 1-4) established in villages with small populations and the complete primary school (grades 1-7 or 8) in locations with larger populations. In addition, the material state of the incomplete primary school is inadequate as many schools lack proper facilities and teaching and learning aids. Further,

most pupils attending the incomplete primary schools are taught in joint classes where the teacher is responsible for more than one grade or class. These small and badly organized schools with small numbers of pupils and teachers are thought to be partly responsible for the high drop-out rate among the village youth. Of the total drop-out rate village youth accounted for 81.5 per cent in 1960-61 and 72 per cent in 1970-71.⁴³ The high drop-out rate is followed by a high percentage of pupils repeating the same grades, for as many as 20 to 30 per cent of every age group, particularly boys, fell back a year or more.⁴⁴ (Also see Table No.3, page 40). The repeaters, as a rule, become the drop-outs and consequently contribute to the migrant unskilled labourers and potential unemployed.⁴⁵

There is also a shortage of highly qualified teaching and administrative personnel in many village primary schools as well as many teachers with little or no pedagogical preparation. Lastly, the

⁴³ Ministerstwo Szkolnictwa, Rocznik Statystyczny Szkolnictwa 1970/71 (Warszawa, Panstwowe Wydawnictwo Szkolne, 1971), p.6.

⁴⁴ Kozakiewicz, op.cit., p.35.

⁴⁵ Pecherski, op.cit., p.213.

geographical distribution of rural schools discriminates against the rural youth as the distances to school are far greater than those stipulated in the Ministry of Education decree.

The striking discrepancy in educational quality between village and city primary schools causes awareness of academic inferiority in the rural youth who consequently choose post-primary education at schools which do not require an entrance examination, i.e. vocational schools for workers and preparatory schools for farmers. The majority of the village primary school leavers, however, joins the labour market as unqualified labourers in the private sector of agriculture or transportation services, construction, industry, etc.

According to the government's 1973 law on school reform the universalization of secondary education is to be achieved by 1990. The prerequisite, however, for the school reform is the general improvement of the educational effectiveness of the village primary school. With this in mind the Ministry of Education has proposed a comprehensive plan to redesign the village school's network. The new village primary

school network is based on the administrative reform⁴⁶ of Poland which took place in 1973. The 1973 reform made the gmina (commune) the basic administrative unit in the countryside in place of a much smaller gromada (village). According to the reform the gmina comprises a cluster of villages numbering usually over a dozen, covers a surface of approximately 120 square kilometers and has an average of 6,800 inhabitants of whom 1,500 are of school age. The new network of schools in the rural areas will correspond to the country's new administrative division, that is, every seat of the gmina authority will also have a gmina⁴⁷ szkola zbiorcza (consolidated rural school). The CRS will have eight grades (in the future 10 grades) and will be attended by all the children within the jurisdiction of the gmina. At present only the pupils living relatively close to the school will be able to start with the first grade. The remainder of the students who live beyond walking distance of the school will attend smaller institutions (grades 1-4) affiliated with the CRS. Upon completion of the fourth

⁴⁶ Swiecki, Andrzej, Oswiata i Szkolnictwo w XXX-Leciu PRL (Thirty Years of Enlightenment and Education in Poland, Warszawa, Ksiazka i Wiedza, 1975), p.64.

⁴⁷ From hereon the consolidated rural school will be referred to as CRS.

grade the students will subsequently be enrolled in the CRS. Some children will commute by public transportation whenever it will be possible, others will be housed in dormitories attached to the CRS.⁴⁸ All the branches (grades 1-4) of the CRS in a gmina jurisdiction will form a part of a single administrative organism. The principal of a CRS will also serve as the principal of all the branch schools in the gmina and will be responsible for the whole educational life of the community, including management of the staff, implementation of the teaching program, methodology, use of utilities, investment, repairs, etc. The administrative personnel will also include one or two vice principals, an administrative agent, a book-keeper, a secretary, laboratory assistants and technical personnel. The plans for the CRS from the organizational point of view, call for a rather large and comprehensive school organism which will include pre-school facilities for children aged 3 to 6, educational aids and equipment supply storage, school and teachers' library, serving the needs of both the school and its branches, well equipped work-shops, educational T.V. room, cafeteria, complex of sport and recreational

facilities. Plans also call for every CRS to be provided with medical and dental facilities.

The traditional name of "school" hardly does justice to the essence of the innovation in the CRS. It would be more aptly called "Gromada Educational and Cultural Centre" since it is not simply an ordinary school, but a set of educational, cultural and welfare institutions. Some of the facilities are to be open to the general public during after school hours for recreational purposes and continuing education programs. The size of the CRS will depend on the number of pupils in a given gmina. Its maximum variant may have forty units (classes) accommodating over 820 pupils, and its minimum variant twelve units with over 270 pupils. The large comprehensive variant will be staffed primarily with subject specialists. The staff will consist of at least two kindergarten teachers, five teachers for grades 1-4, seven Polish language specialists, seven mathematics specialists, three physical education specialists, and two teachers in each of the following specializations: biology, geography, physics, polytechnical subjects and art, and one teacher of the Russian language, history and music. There will also be a num-

ber of special education teachers for the pupils with learning difficulties, and the physically handicapped, as well as qualified personnel for libraries and dormitories.⁴⁹ The advantages of a large staff lie in its flexibility to cover all possible pedagogical and supervisory requirements. Since all teachers in a given gmina will be subordinated to a single administration, the exchange of staff between the main school and its branches will be possible thereby ensuring that most subjects will be taught by a specialist in any given field. For example, manual vocational and polytechnical courses in each school may be taught by the same specialists. In the same way, classes in personal hygiene and health in each school may be taught by the CRS nurse or doctor.

For children with a somewhat lower than average intellectual potential, a special 5-8 grade cycle is planned in which the academic program will be proportionately reduced in favour of manual training for a specific trade. This is meant to create opportunities for pupils who, up until now, repeated grades. And finally, a special teaching stream is planned for disabled, mentally handicapped or educationally neglected children.

The process of establishing the CRS will require an enormous financial and organizational effort on the part of the gmina population and the educational authorities. Since part of the financial contribution will come from the gmina community's coffers the timetable (1975-1980) seems to be rather optimistic. The requirements for the teaching personnel seem also to reflect this optimism: teachers at all levels of the CRS will be expected to have a university level education and principals a university education plus ten⁵⁰ years teaching experience.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p.186.

CHAPTER IV

SOCIAL CLASS DISTRIBUTION IN SECONDARY EDUCATION

The official policy of the Polish Socialist State on education was established in 1945 and called for universal, free and compulsory schooling.¹ Since then there has been a considerable increase in educational facilities, with the result that educational opportunities have become more easily available and more widespread than was the case before the Second World War. Nevertheless, in 1960, twenty-five years after the establishment of this educational policy, the educational authorities realized that the representation of the various social groups in Polish society in the general secondary schools and universities had not changed fundamentally. In order to redress the social wrongs and assure that all social groups would be represented at secondary and university level education, based on their numerical representation in the society at large, the Ministry of Education, in 1965, pro-

¹ _____
Januszkiewicz, Franciszek, Education in Poland (Warsaw, Interpress Publishers, 1973), p.21.

claimed that children of a working class background receive preferential treatment.² In spite of the preferential treatment given children of working class background, the social class composition in the lyceum, and subsequently higher education, still does not correspond to the present social class structure of the Polish society at large. The children of the professional classes, although statistically the smallest group in the population, are over-represented in the general secondary schools and consequently enjoy a similar advantage at institutions of higher learning. On the other hand, the attendance of children of peasant background, who represent 53 per cent of the entire primary school student population, decreased noticeably at the lyceum during the years 1962-70.³ The responsibility for this state of affairs rests in part with the traditional and inflexible structure of the present educational system, as well as with the outdated forms of school selection that each student is subjected to when going from one level of schooling to another. In this respect the main culprit seems to be the general secondary school, the lyceum. Many edu-

² Swiecki, Andrzej, Oswiata i Szkolnictwo w XXX-Leciu PRL (Warszawa, Ksiazka i Wiedza, 1975), p.225.

³ Ibid., p.235.

cationists charge that the lyceum, which provides the crucial avenue to university education, is an outdated bourgeois institution catering to the children of the professional classes and perpetuating the ideals of the elite.

The privileged classes' guiding doctrine in the establishment of the school of general secondary education (gimnazjum) in the period between the First and Second World Wars, was to provide an education for their own classes. The present lyceum is a faithful adaptation of its predecessor, the gimnazjum. The present school, however, is out of touch with contemporary developments in the natural sciences, and as for its teaching methods, some have hardly changed since its establishment.⁴ According to its critics it produces eloquent young people imbued with bookish knowledge yet quite out of touch with social and economic reality. Its biggest drawback, however, is the fact that having retained many of its old characteristics meant expressly for the privileged classes, the lyceum still propagates bourgeois ideals, which are

⁴

Nowacki, Tadeusz, "Prolegomena do Dyskusji nad Treścią Wychowania", Problemy, Monthly (Warszawa, RSW, "Prasa", No.9 (330), 1973), p.4.

said to be incompatible with the objectives of a socialist society.⁵ To remedy this ideological incompatibility the study of dialectics and historical materialism has been added to the lyceum's teaching program. Even though the Marxist philosophy is taught at the lyceum, its fundamental premise, "the unity of theory and practice" has apparently never been implemented as the methods of teaching and the organization of the school itself have not been affected. This became evident in 1961 when the educational authorities attempted to introduce polytechnization in primary and general secondary education. Polytechnization was not only supposed to acquaint students with the current technological revolution in the world and rapid industrialization in Poland, but also develop proletarian solidarity and understanding of the working classes. This process, however, has been hindered by the lack of material facilities (workshops, machine and tools) and trained teachers for polytechnical subjects. It is also due to the unwillingness of teachers to teach practical knowledge that has resulted in the polytechnical subjects becoming "verbal polytechnization"⁶

⁵ Okon, Wincenty, "Perspektywy Wykształcenia Ogólnego", Problemy, Monthly (Warszawa, RSW, "Prasa", No.2, (335), 1974), p.5.

⁶ Nowacki, op.cit., p.4.

(mostly science teachers were asked to teach these subjects). Students, for their part, did not show much enthusiasm for polytechnical subjects either. An educator, T.Nowacki, believes that the attempt by theoreticians to reorganize the school and its curriculum in keeping with the premise of "unity of theory and practice" has not been successful. Marxist philosophy and polytechnization, to T.Nowacki, have simply become additional material to be memorized.⁷

In spite of the theoreticians' attempt to introduce practical subjects (polytechnization) and problematical learning the program of secondary general education still resembles quite vividly the Herbartian school of erudition. It is a school formed by the petit-bourgeois dream of social advancement which provides ever higher diplomas at higher ranks of the educational ladder.

The fact is that the lyceum has always been oriented towards an encyclopaedic form of learning which to a large extent depends on assimilating a wide range of theoretical knowledge. This form of learning apparently causes difficulty for students with managerial,

⁷ Ibid., p.5.

creative, artistic or technical abilities who often drop out of school. This is to say that a determined "bookworm" of average intellectual ability has an advantage over the practically-inclined student in⁸ reaching university.

At present there are two types of secondary schools which form the natural springboard and recruiting centres for higher education: the general secondary school (lyceum) and the vocational secondary school (technikum). The lyceum, which still adheres to the classical and humanistic traditions of the pre-World War II gimnazjum, holds a prestigious reputation among the population at large. Due to the persistence of prestige models of the past in education many parents strive to have their children educated in the lyceum, whose leaving diploma (matura) gives the holder the satisfaction of belonging to the intelligentsia, as well as the practical advantage of qualifying for university study. Apart from the fact that the lyceum prepares its graduates for the university by dint of a thorough preparation in the humanities and the theoretical sciences, it also produces literate clerks of whom there is an overabundance in Poland.

⁸ Ibid., p.4.

For those graduates of the lyceum unable to secure a place at university there are fewer employment opportunities, other than clerical work, in an increasingly technologically oriented economy.

The vocational secondary school (technikum), on the other hand, performs two simultaneous functions: the preparation of technicians for which there is a great need; and the preparation of students for university. Although both schools lead to higher education the graduates of the lyceum fare much better in the university entrance examinations than do the graduates of the technikum. In 1969, 48 per cent of the candidates from the vocational secondary school as compared to 62 per cent from the lyceum passed the university entrance examination.⁹

In this chapter some of the more important factors that determine the social composition of secondary and higher schools (lyceum and technikum) will be given particular attention. For example, the educational aspirations of youth in comparison to the actual numbers of various social groups entering

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Komitet Ekspertow, Raport o Stanie Oswiaty w PRL (Report on the State of Education in Poland, Warszawa, Panstwowy Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1973), p.102.

all types of secondary education will be given mention. The state policy toward numerical distribution of youth into general secondary and vocational schools, and resultant from it, the allocation of funds for student dormitories, grants and scholarships will also be examined.

The present forms of assessing the learning progress of pupils and students seem to be too exacting for a society striving to universalize secondary education. The result is a high failure rate. A high percentage of primary school pupils are being failed for unsatisfactory academic performance and thereby must repeat one or more years. As a result, during the 1968-69 year there were children with an age difference of up to five years in the first grade alone.¹⁰ Grades 1-4 constitute 30 to 40 per cent¹¹ of all repeaters at the primary level. The evaluation of children's academic potential through examinations at each grade of primary school has the effect of eliminating talented young people from higher levels of schooling. The enormity of the

¹⁰ Polska Agencja Interpress, "On the Threshold of Polish Education Reform", Contemporary Poland, Monthly (Warszawa, Polish interpress Agency, No.9, Vol.VII, May 1973), p.13.

¹¹ Komitet Ekspertow, op.cit., p.103.

problem becomes more evident when one looks at the number of repeaters in all primary schools in Poland. (See Table No.3). The inability of some village primary school pupils to cope with the academic content is further compounded by the fact that they have to commute or walk long distances to the nearest school, and are taught in joint classes, where one teacher simultaneously teaches two different grades.¹² Thus, the elimination of some primary pupils from further education is not intentional but an inherent part of the school system.

For those who do not drop out of primary school there are two major obstacles to upward social mobility in the educational system: entrance examinations to secondary schools and to university. The first barrier seems to be an anachronism in a country which subscribes to universal and democratic education. Examinations for secondary school entrance were abolished some time ago in the Soviet Union and in other socialist countries¹³ as well as in most Western European countries.

¹² For a comprehensive account of this problem see previous chapter, "The Village School", p.28.

¹³ Pecherski, Mieczyslaw, Problemy i Perspektywy Rozwoju Szkolnictwa w Polsce Ludowej (Problems and Prospects of the Development of the School System in People's Poland, Warszawa, Ksiazka i Wiedza, 1973), p.230.

The secondary school entrance examination works particularly against rural youth. The numerical representation of students entering the lyceum and technikum shows a marked disproportion between students from rural and urban areas though 53 per cent of all primary school children live in the countryside.¹⁴ In 1968, of all primary school graduates in Poland the number of urban students entering the first year of the lyceum was 78,000 and from the rural areas 36,100; the technikum received 63,000 from urban schools and 38,000 from rural schools. The figures for 1970 were, respectively, the lyceum 78,500 and 35,700; the technikum 66,200 and 37,900.¹⁵ (See Table No.8). The relatively smaller number of rural youth entering the two main secondary schools does not necessarily indicate the peasant origin of its students. There are many children of professional and white collar background who live in rural areas. According to the national census of 1970, 3,369,000 people whose occupation is other than agriculture live in the rural areas, which amounts to 22 per cent

¹⁴ Ozga, Wladyslaw, Rozmieszczenie Szkol w Polsce (Distribution of Schools in Poland, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Szkolne i Pedagogiczne, 1974), p.303.

¹⁵ Ibid., p.181.

TABLE 8

PRIMARY SCHOOL LEAVERS ADMITTED TO ALL TYPES OF SECONDARY
SCHOOLS IN CITIES AND VILLAGES (1960-1970)

Years, numbers of students in thousands and percentages											
	1960	%	1965	%	1968	%	1969	%	1970	%	
General Secondary Total	99,2	25.5	116,8	17.7	114,1	18.8	116,0	18.4	114,2	17.6	
Towns & Cities	68,6	37.3	82,3	25.4	78,0	25.5	79,9	25.0	78,5	23.7	
Villages	30,6	15.0	34,5	10.2	36,1	12.0	36,1	11.7	35,7	11.2	
Secondary Vocational Total	61,2	15.8	103,5	15.6	101,8	16.8	103,4	16.4	104,1	16.6	
Towns & Cities	36,2	19.7	69,9	21.6	63,0	20.6	65,7	20.5	66,2	20.0	
Villages	25,0	12.2	33,3	10.0	38,8	12.9	37,7	12.0	37,9	11.9	
Basic Vocational Total	143,2	36.9	287,8	43.6	291,0	47.9	320,3	50.9	348,4	53.6	
Towns & Cities	64,9	35.2	126,9	39.2	138,5	45.1	153,7	48.1	167,9	50.7	
Villages	78,3	38.3	160,9	47.7	152,5	50.6	166,6	53.7	180,5	56.6	

22

Source: Wladyslaw Ozga, Rozmieszczenie Szkol w Polsce (Warszawa, Wydawnictwa Szkolne i Pedagogiczne, 1974), p.181.

16

of the total rural population. In the Pulawy powiat (county), for instance, of all the graduates of village primary schools of a white collar background, half went on to the lyceum and the remainder to other secondary schools. On the other hand, of the 79.2 per cent children of peasant background who showed interest in continuing post-primary education, 50 per cent enrolled in basic vocational schools (zasadnicza szkola zawodowa) or agricultural preparatory schools (szkola przysposobienia rolniczego), 8.3 per cent managed to pass the entrance examination to the lyceum, while 4.8 per cent did not

17

go to any school. From the above evidence one may conclude that since the majority of white collar workers' children from the rural areas continue education on the secondary level, rural residence alone cannot be blamed for the smaller number of peasant children in the regular secondary schools. This state of affairs can be explained, partly at least, by the cultural attitudes still strongly ingrained in the respective social groups and consequently their differing aspirations.

16

Ibid., p.180.

17

Szymanski, M., "Uwarunkowanie Selekcje Szkolnej Mlodziemym Srodowisku Wiejskim", Przeglad Pedagogiczny, Monthly (Warszawa, No.1, Jan.1971), pp.64-65.

Strongly ingrained cultural attitudes of the various social groups play a decisive role in the educational aspirations of parents for their children. Parents with more schooling tend to encourage the same in their children. They also emphasize the necessity of finishing secondary education because it opens the door to university study. On the other hand, children of parents with little education choose a shorter period of schooling often not exceeding the primary school level. This may well be the reason why 70 per cent of the children from professional and white collar families go to the lyceum, whereas 70 per cent of the children of working class¹⁸ and peasant parents choose vocational education. Over half of primary school leavers whose parents had never attended any form of schooling show no interest in further education. The interest to continue past primary school increases among primary school leavers (70 per cent)¹⁹ whose parents had some primary school education. A social scientist, Irena Nowakowska, came to a similar conclusion in researching the educational attitudes of parents in Warsaw, namely,

18 _____
Swiecki, op.cit., p.226.

19 Ibid., p.235.

that the social background of a child is the most important factor in the choice of post-primary education. In families where parents are university graduates the majority of children select a secondary general education, and only as a second choice the vocational secondary school. The motive for this choice is often the belief that the lyceum is the only school which provides a truly cultural education.

...the risk of not getting into university after leaving a school (lyceum) which provides no practical training does not deter intelligentsia families, but it is a prospect which is on the whole unacceptable to both working class parents and children.²⁰

These examples would appear to indicate that it is the cultural environment (social background, parent's education, and to a lesser degree, place of residence) in which the child grows up that more often than not determines his educational career.

The general situation across Poland appears unsatisfactory as regards students of peasant background continuing post-primary education. The difficulty

20

Nowakowska, Irena, "Education and Aspirations", Polish Perspectives, Monthly (Warsaw, Prasa-Ksiazka-Ruch, Vol. XVII, No.9, Sept.1974), p.37.

encountered by the youth of peasant background in overcoming the first educational barrier is evidenced in the decrease of this social group in the lyceum and technikum between 1966 and 1971. In 1966, students of peasant background comprised 18 per cent of the total number of students in the lyceum, and 17.5 per cent of the first year entrants. In 1971, the numbers diminished, respectively, to 15.7 per cent and 14.6 per cent. The situation in the technikum, during the same period, was equally discouraging. In 1966 the youth of peasant background represented 23.7 per cent of the total number of students and 22.8 per cent of the first year class. In 1971, their percentage dropped, respectively, to 21.3 per cent and 20.2 per cent.²¹ (See Table No.9). The decline in the number of students of peasant background in secondary schools, particularly the lyceum, from which universities recruit almost 80 per cent of their students, means a corresponding decline²² of this social group in the university.

The distance to the secondary school from a rural residence contributes significantly to the selection process of the rural youth. This is evidenced

21 _____
Ozga, op.cit., p.79,188.

22 Swiecki, op.cit., p.226,227. (Other authors estimates vary between 60 and 70 per cent).

TABLE 9

THE SOCIAL BACKGROUND OF STUDENTS IN LYCEUM AND TECHNIKUM IN THE SCHOOL
YEARS 1965/66, 1969/70 AND 1970/71
(in percentages)

Year	Secondary general <u>lyceum</u>			Secondary vocational <u>technikum</u>		
	Working class	Peasant background	White collar	Working class	Peasant background	White collar
1965/66 Total	28.4	18.0	43.2	37.6	23.7	28.7
In first grade	30.4	17.5	42.2	38.1	22.8	29.1
1969/70 Total	31.7	16.3	45.0	42.0	21.8	28.8
In first grade	34.5	16.0	42.7	42.8	20.6	29.6
1970/71 Total	33.1	15.7	45.2	44.5	21.3	28.2
In first grade	35.5	14.6	44.2	45.9	20.2	28.1

Source: Główny Urząd Statystyczny, Rocznik Statystyczny Szkolnictwa 1970/71
(Warszawa, Główny Urząd Statystyczny, 1971), pp.79,188.

in the present network of the lycea which favours the urban youth, for although the schools are evenly distributed throughout the country, they are mainly located in the urban areas. Of a total of 862 schools only 68 are located in the villages, and of those there are 20 in the wojewodztwo (province) of Rzeszow. But of the 16 existing provinces that make up the State of Poland 8 do not have a single lyceum located in a village.²³ The peasant youth, having some difficulty in adjusting to a new urban environment, shows a preference for secondary schools located in villages and small towns. But it is in the towns and cities with administrative centres (wojewodztwo) that one finds the greatest concentration of well equipped and well organized general secondary and vocational secondary schools. The small percentage of peasant youth in the lycea in the wojewodztwo administrative centres of Kielce (8.4 per cent) and Lublin (4.8 per cent) is indicative that agricultural regions lose their youth to the basic vocational schools in small towns and villages. (See Table No.10). This process is aptly illustrated in the powiat town of Siemantyczne, where in 1962 only 43.6 per cent chose basic vocational schools,

²³ Ibid., p.189,190.

TABLE 10

PERCENTAGES OF CHILDREN OF WORKING CLASS AND PEASANT BACKGROUND IN THE
FIRST GRADE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION IN 1969/70 SCHOOL YEAR

Localities of schools	Secondary general (<u>lyceum</u>)		Secondary vocational (<u>technikum</u>)		Basic vocational (<u>ZSZ</u>)		
	Working class	Peasants	Working class	Peasants	Working class	Peasants	
A. County Kielce							
1. County as a whole	31.0	27.1	38.7	31.7	47.3	37.0	62
2. Kielce (city)	27.0	8.4	38.0	21.8	44.8	35.2	
3. District administra- tive centres (towns)	33.3	22.6	41.3	28.1	49.0	34.9	
4. All other small towns	33.7	39.5	51.6	53.4	49.7	38.4	
5. Villages	22.6	55.6	19.4	61.8	37.1	60.1	
B. County Olsztyn							
1. County as a whole	28.5	20.6	36.1	25.9	47.3	30.7	
2. Olsztyn (city)	14.8	4.8	35.1	15.9	47.1	21.4	
3. District administra- tive centres (towns)	31.6	23.5	37.7	28.2	48.0	33.5	
4. All other small towns	32.4	28.9	36.4	38.8	41.5	37.0	
5. Villages	-	-	32.6	36.7	56.5	30.2	

Source: Wladyslaw Ozga, Rozmieszczenie Szkol w Polsce (Warszawa, Wydawnictwa Szkolne i Pedagogiczne, 1974), p.185.

whereas by 1970 the enrollment in the same type of school increased to 61.2 per cent.²⁴ In 1971, students of peasant background predominated in the preparatory agricultural schools (62.4 per cent) and comprised 28.4 per cent of the school population in all basic vocational schools in Poland.²⁵ Incomplete secondary education, including zasadnicza szkola zawodowa (basic vocational school), zasadnicza szkola rolnicza (basic agricultural school) and szkola przysposobienia rolniczego (agricultural preparatory school), do not require an entrance examination nor do they prepare for further education. Consequently, the road to social upward mobility for the great majority of rural primary school leavers closes at the stage of a qualified worker. The same trend can be noticed among urban working class parents who consider secondary vocational education as the most desirable for their children. In practice, however, such parents would rather see their children earning their keep as soon as possible "which tends to modify this aspiration to basic vocational education. This is confirmed by the national census which shows that among

²⁴ _____
Ozga, op.cit., p.185.

²⁵ Ibid., p.183. (Also see Table No.10).

persons between the age of 25 and 29 the largest²⁶ portion had a basic vocational education". However, should a graduate of a basic vocational school want to continue his education at the university level he must do the four-year general secondary or five-year vocational secondary education program and obtain the Matura.

There is also a substantial number of village and city primary school leavers who do not continue at any level of education. In 1973, some 17 per cent of the total number of rural primary school leavers did not go on to the secondary school. The corresponding figure for the urban primary school²⁷ leavers was 3.7 per cent. One of the reasons for the great difference between the numbers of village and urban primary school graduates who do not take up secondary education, is the lack of educational facilities in the immediate vicinity of the village youth's residence. Another reason is that the rural

²⁶ Nowakowska, op.cit., p.38.

²⁷ Kuberski, Jerzy, Aktualne i Perspektywiczne Problemy Polityki Osviatowej (The Present and Future Problems of Educational Policy, Warszawa, Ksiazka i Wiedza, 1974), p.137. (Kozakiewicz's estimate of rural youth who does not take up further education is much higher, 30-40 per cent, in Polish Perspectives, No.2, 1972, p.16.

primary school does not adequately prepare rural youth for secondary school competition with graduates of urban primary schools. In addition, the process of adjustment to a new urban environment poses an emotional problem for the rural youth thereby discouraging them from seeking further education outside of their home environment. Finally, graduates of village primary schools are not properly informed of their educational choices, have little knowledge of the application procedure to schools in other parts of the country, and do not know the entrance examination²⁸ dates for secondary school. In consequence, over 50 per cent of the village youth opt for the more numerous and closely located basic vocational schools; 10-14 per cent choose secondary education (lyceum or technikum), and approximately 30-40 per cent²⁹ finish education at the primary school level. Thus, it becomes evident that there is a significant loss of potential talent from among rural youth who do not continue their education.

When it became apparent that the polytechnization

28 _____
Pecherski, op.cit., p.232.

29 Kozakiewicz, M., "Higher Education: Quantity into Quality", Polish Perspectives, Monthly (Warszawa, Prasa-Ksiazka-Ruch, No.2, Vol.XV, 1972), p.16, and in Komitet Ekspertow, op.cit., p.98.

of the primary school and the lyceum did not produce the expected results the educational authorities decided to channel the majority of primary school leavers into the basic and secondary vocational schools.³⁰

The Committee of Experts charged that the educational authorities blocked the free flow of students to the lycea by setting up a demanding entrance examination. This resulted in the desired student ratio of 4:1 between the vocational schools and the lycea.³¹

According to the Committee of Experts, the effect of this policy was a decline in the number of students entering the complete secondary school (lyceum and technikum). Between 1967-68 and 1970-71 the number of students in complete secondary schools fell from 43.1 to 33.6 per cent.

A simultaneous increase in basic vocational schools from 39.8 per cent to 53.6 per cent was recorded.³²

The Committee of Experts contended that "although a relatively large percentage of youth should be channelled to the vocational stream it is undesirable to decide casually who should go".³³ The policy of

³⁰ Contemporary Poland, op.cit., p.14.

³¹ Komitet Ekspertow, op.cit., p.97.

³² Ibid., p.101.

³³ Ibid., p.98.

directing over 80 per cent of all primary school leavers to all types of vocational schools was reinforced by a correspondingly higher allotment of scholarships and places in dormitories to the students in the vocational stream.³⁴ (See Table No.11). Professor Kietlinska argues that economic considerations , more often than not, determine the educational choice of bright working class youngsters.

Given the situation one cannot be surprised at the rational decision taken by parents (farmers and workers), to send their children, even the most gifted ones, to schools which provide a better opportunity of obtaining a place in a boarding house and getting a scholarship grant.³⁵

The rural youth who intends to continue at the general secondary education level encounters yet another difficulty, namely, that of obtaining grants and dormitory space. Not only are lesser amounts of money given to the lyceum students in the form of grants, but there are also many complaints about

³⁴ _____
Swiecki, op.cit., p.228.

³⁵ Polska Agencja Interpress, "Polish Discussions and Polemics", Contemporary Poland, Monthly (Warsaw, Polish Interpress Agency, No.5, Vol.VI, May 1972), p.17.

TABLE 11

THE PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS BENEFITING FROM BOARDING
SCHOOLS AND SCHOLARSHIP GRANTS

Year	Percentage of pupils attending boarding schools		Percentage of pupils with scholarship grants	
	general education	vocational	general education	vocational
1960	11.4	36.4	8.5	37.8
1970	8.3	26.3	7.8	30.2

Source: "Polish Discussions and Polemics", Contemporary Poland (Warsaw, Polish Interpress Agency, Vol.VI, No.5, 1972), p.17.

irregularities in the process of allocating both grants and dormitory space. These complaints are caused by "individual arbitrariness, favouritism and highhandedness, if not outright corruption", says Fiszman, and adds that "the most frequent complaint is that dormitory space, more often than not, is assigned to youth of relatively wealthy background, or children whose parents are socially or politically well connected."³⁶

That standards of education count for much in achieving a position in society is something recognized by all social groups. In practice, however, when it comes to the case of peasant families economic considerations weigh heavily against educating their offspring and denying themselves the benefit of cheap labour their children would otherwise provide.³⁷ The practical consideration of learning a trade prevails among the working class and peasant parents who expect their children to start earning a living relatively early.³⁸ The in-

³⁶ Fiszman, Joseph R., "Education and Social Mobility in People's Poland", The Polish Review, Quarterly (New York, The Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America Inc., Vol.XVI, No.3, 1971), p.8.

³⁷ Ibid., p.7.

³⁸ Nowakowska, op.cit., p.37.

centive, points out Nowakowska, to have their children educated at a higher level than the basic vocational school is further undermined by the relatively small difference in salary earned by vocational and higher school graduates.

The genuine opportunities of attaining after a relatively short period of elementary vocational training, an economic status which is no worse, and sometimes better, than that of people with a longer period of secondary education and a very distinctly longer period of higher education behind them encourage a corresponding motivation.³⁹

Since the Second World War there has been an attempt to increase the number of students of working class background and peasant origin at the university level. This campaign is considered to be a remedy for the historical wrongs committed against the children of working class and peasant origin by previous governments. This approach is guided by the ideological notion that the new socialist intelligentsia should spring from the working classes, and consequently become the guardian of socialism and so further the interests of the class from which it

³⁹ Ibid., p.38,39.

⁴⁰
 originated. Since the number of places at the universities is generally smaller than the number of candidates applying for them, and since the professional classes have dominated in this area, a point system was instituted in 1961. This point system is meant to maintain a proportionate balance of the various social groups at university level education equivalent to their representation in the society at large. In order to qualify for higher education every secondary education graduate must successfully pass an entrance examination. Passing the entrance examination is, however, important though not decisive in securing a place at university. Candidates of working class or peasant parents receive five extra points for their social origins, "which is justified by the fact that the social structure of students in academic schools does not correspond to the social structure of the country as a whole".⁴¹ It is only with great effort and by means of various artificial devices (the point system, scholarships, etc.) that the universities manage to maintain a

⁴⁰ _____
 Szczepanski, Jan, Odmiany Czasu Terazniejszego (Warszawa, Ksiazka i Wiedza, 1971), pp.417-418.

⁴¹
 Contemporary Poland, op.cit., p.15.

relatively high proportion of students of peasant and working class background. Nevertheless, in the eyes of the government the situation is still far from satisfactory. This can be seen by comparing the structure of the Polish society at large with the social composition of first-year university students in 1971. Polish society at that time was composed of 41.7 per cent workers, 29.7 per cent peasants and 28.6 per cent professionals and white collar workers. Of the first-year students 29.9 per cent were of working class origin (34.3 per cent in 1970), 14.1 per cent of peasant origin (15.1 per cent in 1970), 56.0 per cent of intelligentsia and other social groups (50.6 per cent in 1970).⁴² These figures once again demonstrate the inconsistency between reality and the official government position. Suffice it to say that "every second student comes from the intelligentsia, every fourth from the working class and every seventh is of peasant stock",⁴³ which clearly indicates the perpetuation of the old patterns as regards the social structure of youth studying at universities.

⁴² _____
Ibid., p.17.

⁴³ _____
Ibid., p.17.

The above mentioned system of admission criteria for higher studies has been strongly criticised in the university circles as well as by the press at large. Accordingly, it does not effectively promote the end for which it was intended to serve, namely, to increase the flow of working class and peasant youth to university.⁴⁴ On the other hand, there is criticism in the academic and technical community that due to the system of equalization of social groups in the student body academic standards are suffering. Professor Maslinski argues that students who were accepted to university on other than solely academic grounds make the university's task more difficult:

Experience teaches that when criteria other than assessment of intelligence and knowledge decide acceptance for studies, the group of weaker students weighs heavily on the course of teaching and hampers the academic school in fulfilment of its principle tasks.⁴⁵

Furthermore, some of the critics contend that the artificial improvement of the social structure by awarding extra points to the working class in university entry procedures "does not stand the test of time, or if it

44

Ibid., p.17.

45

Ibid., p.16.

does, it is only at the cost of lowering the level of education."⁴⁶ The academic society argues that the student "progress at school should depend solely on ability and character, and not on such considerations as social background, regional conditions, parent's means, etc."⁴⁷

In order to eliminate the elitist patterns of secondary education the government passed a law in 1973 which, when put into effect, will change the present eight-year primary and four-year secondary general schools into a ten-year universal school. Due to improved teaching methods, use of audio-visual equipment, modernized teaching and learning aids and rational selection of subjects, the ten-year universal school is expected to include the core of the academic program of the present lyceum.⁴⁸ The learning process in the ten-year universal school will have three cycles. The first and second cycle will basically correspond to an extended primary school program. In the third cycle, grades 8-10, students will undergo the first form of se-

⁴⁶ Przegląd Techniczny (Technical Weekly Review, Warszawa, RSW, Prasa, 15.08.71), p.4.

⁴⁷ "School of the Future", Polish Perspectives, Monthly (Warszawa, Prasa-Książka-Ruch, No.5, May 1972), p.41.

⁴⁸ Komitet Ekspertów, op.cit., p.200.

lection by means of streaming into four academically distinct groups: humanities, a socio-economic stream, a chemistry-biology-agriculture stream and a mathematics-physics-polytechnical stream.⁴⁹ The basic difference, however, between the present lyceum and the ten-year universal school will lie in the fact that graduates of the latter will be accepted to first-year university studies without an entrance examination.⁵⁰ The final selection will take place in the course of the first year of university studies.⁵¹

As a result of the 1973 reform all children, irrespective of whether in village or urban area, will theoretically have an equal start beginning with compulsory attendance of kindergarten. The two ways of getting to university, one through the lyceum, the other through vocational secondary school, will

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Swiecki, op.cit., p.78.

50 The experts responsible for the 1973 school reform differ on the subject of whether leavers of the ten-year universal school should be admitted directly to university or subjected to additional schooling. At the time of writing it has been proposed that irrespective of whether there will be additional schooling or not at the secondary level, all secondary school leavers will have the right to enter university studies.

51 Komitet Ekspertow, op.cit., p.200.

be eliminated. All graduates of the ten-year universal secondary school will have the choice of going to a variety of vocational schools or directly to university. Theoretically most of the difficulties hitherto encountered by the working classes in getting to university will be removed.

CHAPTER V

THE QUALITY OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

It has been argued that the more schooling a worker has the greater is his productivity and higher the quality of his work.¹ Using the above assumption as a guideline, this chapter will examine how well the vocational branch of the educational system has been adapted to post-Second World War economic changes and industrial development in socialist Poland.

More specifically, this chapter will deal with the educational and vocational preparedness of manpower in Poland; the lack of coordination between the national and regional economies and vocational education as regards the future demand and supply of trained labour. It will also deal with the unsatisfactory quality of vocational training, the inadequate vocational guidance provided for graduates of the primary and general secondary schools, the anti-technological bias reflected in the educational choices of youth and the shortage of skilled labour

¹ Nowakowska, Irena, "Education and Aspirations", Polish Perspectives, Monthly (Warszawa, Prasa-Ksiazka-Ruch, No.9, Vol.XVII, 1974), p.34.

in the public and private sectors of agriculture.

In 1972, 23.3 million citizens aged 18 years and over were employed in the national economy. Of this number 670,000 were university graduates and another 350,000 were on the way to finishing university. Some 3.4 million were secondary school graduates and 720,000 were still attending secondary schools. Basic vocational or primary school education was claimed by 9.8 million. Less impressive was the fact that some 8.4 million had not completed primary education.² On the positive side there seems to have been an improvement over a ten-year period in the educational standards of the population at large, particularly in the increase of vocational education graduates and those with complete primary schooling. (See Table No.12). On the other hand, the 8.4 million workers who did not finish primary education, at which level the pupils are taught civics and the basics of polytechnization, were not only incapable of following and fully comprehending educational television programs or grasping the nature of the socio-political changes propagated by mass

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Szczepanski, J., Refleksje nad Osviata (Reflection upon Education, Warszawa, Panstwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1973), p.24.

TABLE 12
POPULATION OVER 15
ACCORDING TO STANDARD OF EDUCATION (%)

Year Sex	Total*	Higher	Post-second, incomplete higher, secondary	Vocational, incomplete secondary	Elementary	Incomplete elementary and none
1960 total	20,004,229	2.1	10.2	4.6	37.9	45.2
men	9,260,396	3.1	10.7	6.4	37.0	52.2
women	10,743,833	1.2	9.8	2.9	38.4	47.3
1970 total	24,014,974	2.7	13.4	14.5	44.9	24.5
men	11,444,420	3.7	12.6	18.2	43.7	21.5
women	12,570,374	1.8	14.0	10.9	45.3	27.2

*Exclusive of persons with unidentified education

Source: Irena Nowakowska, "Education and Aspirations", Polish Perspectives (Warszawa, Prasa-Ksiazka-Ruch, Vol.XVII, No.9, 1974), p.34.

media, but were ineffective in the industrial change³ which requires highly skilled workers. The fact remains that it is difficult to effect economic modernization and industrialization in a country where, in 1970, every third worker was without formal vocational education, or where more than half of the 10 million employees working in socialist enterprises had a primary school education only, or had not finished primary school.⁴ In addition, many farm labourers who migrated to the cities have difficulty in adjusting to work discipline and the factory environment, all of which has hurt industrial productivity. For some time the Polish press has lashed out at workers, criticising them for their lack of discipline at work, late arrival for work, arbitrary departure from work, unjustified absenteeism and transgression against work regulations.⁵ So far most of the unskilled labour force in Poland is recruited from the villages. In fact, construction, transport

³ Ibid., p.26.

⁴ Ibid., p.25.

⁵ "Produkcja, Wybor Zatrudnienie", Zycie Gospodarcze, Weekly (Warszawa, P.W. Prasa, No.15, 1966), p.1. Criticism of workers' attitudes towards work appeared not only in the papers published by the United Workers Party (the Communist Party), but also in the non-government press, which, it should be noted, is subject to censorship.

and agricultural services are mostly dependent on it. Although part of this untrained labour force earns its living in industry and other non-agricultural occupations, the labourers still retain ownership⁶ of farms and manage them on a part-time basis. The fact that in the first half of 1966 nearly 1 million workers from a labour force of about 9 million changed jobs and that 111,000 left work without notice, may be attributed not only to the lack of vocational training but also to dissatisfaction with working conditions and low salaries and the return of the bi-occupational labour force⁷ to their farms for the harvest season.

The main objective of the 1961 primary school reform was to revise the school curriculum toward bringing it into line with modern technological development, thereby attracting more students into the specialized vocational stream. The reform, however, had little effect on the educational choices of the 656,000 pupils who graduated from the seventh grade

⁶ Kolbusz, Franciszek, "Chlopo-Robotnicy", Nowe Drogi, Monthly (Warszawa, PZPR, No.8, 1973), p.8.

⁷ "Zywocik Gospodarczy", Zycie Gospodarcze, Weekly (Warszawa, P.W. Prasa, No.40, 1966), p.3.

of the elementary school in 1966. Faced with the choice of going on to eighth grade which leads to secondary general education, or alternatively, saving at least one year by transferring at that point to the secondary vocational stream, "only 39.5 per cent opted for the latter alternative, while 60.5 per cent⁸ decided to remain for the eighth grade, and hope."

That same year, there were 60,000 graduates of secondary vocational schools as compared with 80,400 graduates of general secondary education schools. While the graduates of the vocational stream were assured of a place in the employment market, the graduates of the general secondary schools faced an⁹ uncertain future.

According to the weekly, Glos Nauczycielski (Teachers Voice), of the total number of 80,400 graduates of the general secondary schools, only 27,000 were to be admitted to higher education, 10,000 would seek clerical employment and 15,000 would start upon

⁸ Fiszman, Joseph R., "Education and Social Mobility in People's Poland", The Polish Review (New York, the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America Inc., No.3, Vol. XVI, 1971), p.24.

⁹ "Editorial", Glos Nauczycielski, Weekly (Warszawa, RSW Prasa, June 26, 1966), pp.1-3.

vocational education and, in consequence, enter the employment market some years later than if they had chosen entrance into the secondary vocational system immediately upon leaving the seventh grade.¹⁰ The number of lyceum graduates who were not admitted to university or other post-secondary education increased from 20 per cent in 1966 to 54.2 per cent in 1970.¹¹ These figures indicate that in spite of the universal trend toward greater emphasis on technological education, there was in Poland a strong prejudice against vocational education, which may reflect the strength of the literary tradition in Poland.

It would appear that as a result of prevailing cultural attitudes that not only are large numbers of youth delayed from productive work, but each year the lycea are over-subscribed while the secondary vocational schools and basic vocational schools have vacancies. In 1966-67 approximately 30 per cent of secondary vocational school places remained unfilled.¹²

¹⁰ Ibid., p.3.

¹¹ Komitet Ekspertow, Raport o Stanie Oswiaty w PRL (Warszawa, Panstwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1973), p.98.

¹² Fiszman, op.cit., p.6.

Although the number of vacancies in vocational schools have steadily decreased, the unfavourable attitudes towards jobs in agriculture, mining and construction still persist. In 1973-74 the vocational schools still had a shortage of 33,000 pupils which amounted to 8 per cent of the schools' total capacity.¹³

Here one has to add that no entrance examination is required to enter the basic vocational school. From the above evidence one may surmise that although expanding industry has been opening up new employment possibilities in a wide variety of technical skills, the lure of employment in industry is still outweighed by the prestige of belonging to the intelligentsia.

Vocational schools have been under increasing criticism from trade unions for being unable to prepare their graduates for the manpower needs of industry and agriculture. There is a general belief among educators and managers of industry that vocational schools have not kept pace with the technological and organizational advances of industry.

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Kuberski, Jerzy, Aktualne i Perspektywiczne Problemy Polityki Oświatowej (Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1974), pp.126,127.

According to the Committee of Experts vocational teachers need to update their general knowledge of new technological production processes as well as their methods of teaching.¹⁴ It is also said that the curricula are over-burdened with superfluous and outdated material and that the textbooks are out of date. It is acknowledged that the vocational schools lack basic teaching and learning aids, for example, draughtsman's equipment, audio-visual equipment, films and photocopying machines. Further, the machines, tools and laboratory equipment with which the students are trained are much older than those which are presently used in industry. The increasing discord between what the vocational schools prepare their graduates for and what is demanded of them by their future employers has been discussed at great length in the Polish press.

There is also a great deal of truth in the complaint that vocational school leavers arrive in industry ill-prepared both technically and mentally. The prime reason for this is that the equipment on which they have been trained is obsolete and bears little resemblance to modern

installations. Nor is the situation improved by the insufficiently close ties between school and industry.¹⁵

The greater demand for vocational education facilities has resulted in a shortage of buildings, workshops and dormitories. In 1971, vocational education was short of 12,100 classrooms and 23,000 student working stations in workshops. Many vocational schools operated in two shifts to accommodate the 1.61 students¹⁶ assigned to every student station. With the exception of some vocational schools attached to factories and commercial enterprises which train labour for their own requirements, there seems to be little or no co-operation between industry and vocational schools. In fact, schools have difficulty in obtaining permission for their students to do practical training in factories and other public enterprises. Factory managers are reluctant to designate some of the factory's facilities for vocational education purposes as this would interfere with meeting production quotas. Even for a field trip to a factory, vocational schools must receive a formal permit from the appropriate

¹⁵ "Adaptation and Training", Polish Perspectives (Warszawa, RSW Prasa-Ksiazka-Ruch, Vol.XIV, No.12, 1973), p.36.

¹⁶ Komitet Ekspertow, op.cit., p.137.

authority of a given industry. These are just some of the reasons why graduates of vocational schools lack practical training experience and cannot operate machines in a production line.¹⁷

Although graduates of vocational secondary schools (technika) are regarded as lower and middle management, and employed as such (foreman, floor supervisor, etc.), they lack both work and supervisory experience. Graduates of the technikum are said to have difficulties in putting their theoretical knowledge into practice because they have not had a sufficient period of work apprenticeship. Vocational school programs are deficient in treating such matters as industrial production, supply management, efficient methods of production and laws¹⁸ of work. Furthermore, since science, technology and production management are continuously undergoing adjustment it is difficult to imagine managerial skills in graduates who have not had extensive practical training in different stations on the production

¹⁷ Ibid., p.135.

¹⁸ Jan Szczepanski, "Wzajemne Zaleznosci", Problemy (Warszawa, RSW Prasa, No.11 (332), 1973), pp.6-7, and Komitet Ekspertow, op.cit., p.136.

line, nor management training in the school curriculum.

One of the main weaknesses of vocational education is its heavy specialization. There are approximately 220 specializations for workers in the vocational system, and 243 specialized occupations for technicians.¹⁹ These specialists are not sufficiently instructed in general technical knowledge, which means they lack flexibility in adapting to changing production techniques and technologies. In short, a graduate of any of the 463 specializations is confined to a very narrow field of training. Apart from the fact that narrow specialization is very costly and requires a longer period of training, it also makes the vocational school system inefficient due to the constant changes in production techniques in modern industry.²⁰ As a result, by the time a student finishes his schooling and acquires a trade, his skill is often outdated or is no longer in demand.²¹ There is also the problem of fragmentation of staff and resources

¹⁹ Poland A Handbook (Warsaw, Interpress Publishers, 1974), p.328.

²⁰ Komitet Ekspertow, op.cit., p.141.

²¹ Polska Agencja Interpress, "On the Threshold of Polish Education Reform", Contemporary Poland, Monthly (Warsaw, Polish Interpress Agency, No.9, Vol.VII, May 1973), pp.14-15.

in the vocational education sector as the Ministry of Education is responsible for some of the vocational schools and the Ministry of Engineering Industries for others. This fact stands in the way of teaching a "unified syllabus answering the needs of the plant."²²

As a communist state Poland has a centralized system of government whose responsibility, among others, is the overall direction and administration of the country's economy and schooling. It is therefore both surprising and ironic that there exists a lack of cooperation and coordination between education and industry.²³ For instance, vocational guidance facilities are grossly inadequate. In 1966 there were only 143 vocational guidance offices in Poland. Three years later, 129 powiats (counties) did not have a single guidance office for either primary or secondary school graduates.²⁴ Primary and general secondary schools receive little in the way of publications on educational requirements for positions in industry, services, or job availability

²² Polish Perspectives, op.cit., p.36.

²³ Jan Szczepanski, op.cit., p.6.

²⁴ Swiecki, Andrzej, Oswiata i Szkolnictwo w XXX-leciu PRL (Warszawa, Ksiazka i Wiedza, 1975), p.274,282.

in various regions of the country. A poll taken among eighth graders shows that they rarely discuss their career plans with teachers or guidance personnel. According to the poll, 76.1 per cent of the students discussed their career plans with parents, 32.8 per cent with friends, 12.2 per cent with a brother or sister, 10 per cent did not seek any advice, 8.9 per cent talked with other relatives, 6.2 per cent with teachers and guidance personnel and 4.8 per cent with friends of parents.²⁵ It may be said that parental influence weighs decisively on the vocational direction a child will take. Since parents are often concerned with the material costs of educating a child they may not take into consideration his academic abilities, temperament, likes and dislikes, but instead the proximity of the vocational school, availability of grants, and whether or not the school has dormitory facilities. In any case, there is little or no cooperation between the vocational schools and various industries and services in the socialized economy. Principals of vocational schools are not kept apprised of the vocational opportunities in industry. As a result of this lack of cooperation large

numbers of graduates from the basic vocational schools do not work in their specializations, a trend which has been increasing (approaching 60 per cent) in some trades. The same phenomenon occurs in higher education where 30 per cent of the graduates do not work in their specialization.²⁶ These numbers indicate that large investments in vocational education do not produce the desired social and economic benefits. At the same time many graduates become frustrated and disaffected because they cannot find work in their chosen field.

The government has been exerting considerable pressure on the regional authorities to make agriculture a viable and self-supporting industry. This policy, however, is weakened by the complex socio-cultural and economic transformation of the entire country which has been brought about by industrialization. Rapid industrialization has induced large numbers of young people to migrate from the villages to large towns and cities in pursuit of a better standard of living. The continuous drain of labour from the rural areas is a matter of growing concern

²⁶ _____
Szczepanski, op.cit., p.7.

because almost 70 per cent of the young people between the ages of 20 and 39 now earn their living by means other than agriculture. On the other hand, nearly 70 per cent of the elderly population (above the age of 60) live off agriculture.²⁷ This results in a rather rapidly aging process of the agricultural population, especially so in areas near large cities and industrial complexes. One can only fully comprehend the significance the effect this has on the implementation of modern techniques in agriculture when one realizes that the greatest incidence of illiterates and semi-illiterates exists in the age group²⁸ over 60 (mostly to be found on private farmsteads).

Consider the educational qualifications of the agricultural labour force in 1970. For every 1,000 workers in agriculture only 0.4 per cent had higher education; 2.8 per cent secondary education; 4.8 per cent unfinished secondary or basic vocational education; 42.5 per cent primary education and 49.5 per cent incomplete primary education.²⁹ The unsatisfac-

27 _____
Polska Agencja Interpress, "Youth: Poland's Great Problem", Contemporary Poland (Warsaw, Polish Interpress Agency, No.2, Vol.VI, 1972), p.12

28 Nowakowska, op.cit., p.35.

29 Wolczyk, Jerzy, Elementy Polityki Oświatowej (Warszawa, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1974), p.175.

tory educational standards of those in agriculture may be partly explained by the proportionately smaller number of agricultural schools as compared with vocational schools in other branches of the economy. In 1970, the technical sector of education trained 1,075,000 students, the economic sector of education (services, communications, etc.) trained 307,000 and the agricultural sector trained only 155,000. The disproportion between agricultural education and the other types becomes evident when one takes into account that 6 million people were employed at that time in agriculture whereas 10.4 million were employed in the remaining sector of the economy.³⁰

The problem is further compounded by the difficulty in recruiting village youth to agricultural preparatory schools (szkola przysposobienia rolniczego), as those who intend to work their parents' farm usually learn traditional husbandry from their parents. The agricultural preparatory schools can hardly attract 50 per cent of their planned quota of students, consequently, the demand for qualified

labour with agricultural skills has been met only
³¹
 by 30 per cent.

The present migration of young rural males to the urban areas is responsible for the fact that agriculture is becoming gradually feminized. This trend is clearly shown in educational choices of the total student population attending vocational schools. Statistics show that in 1972 there were some 171,400 students in agricultural specializations of which 110,000 were women. At the completion of the same school year, of 48,000 graduates in agricultural specializations, women accounted for 33,600.³² The mechanization of agriculture has not yet reached a stage at which physical labour can be ignored and therefore, the outflow of young men to industry and the resulting feminization of agriculture may have an adverse effect on agricultural production.

The migration to cities and industrial centres

³¹ Brzoska, Marian, "Main Barriers and Chances of Rural Education Development", Village and Agriculture (Warszawa, Polish Academy of Sciences, Polish Scientific Publishers, Vol.I, 1975), pp.125-126.

³² Główny Urząd Statystyczny, Rocznik Statystyczny 1973 (Warszawa, GUS, Tab.1 (32), 1973), p.66.

in pursuit of a better standard of living is a phenomenon present in all modern industrial states. In Poland, the continuous flow of young people to urban areas weakens the already ailing agricultural condition. The school system in the rural areas is partly to blame for this trend as it is unable to interest youth in rational and modern methods of agriculture. This is to emphasize that the village school has been unsuccessful in overcoming some of the prejudice harboured among the rural population against farm work as a respectable occupation.

In conclusion, educational preparedness for the national economy has not, for the most part, been adequate as one third of the entire labour force did not complete primary education. As a result it is difficult to proceed with modernization and further industrialization with workers who are lacking the basic technological skills and training. The lack of vocational training among a large section of the labour force may be a contributing factor to low productivity and casual attitudes towards work.

In the face of industrial and technological expansion and the government's emphasis on the values of a new industrial culture, vocational education has encountered a strong prejudice against practical knowledge among the population at large. The humanistically oriented values still would seem to take precedence over the technological culture.

The Committee of Experts did not provide a structural blueprint for the reform of vocational education. The Committee's proposals deal primarily with the reform of primary and general secondary education. Nevertheless, one can deduce from the proposed curriculum of the ten-year universal school that the school will have a considerable impact on the whole of vocational education. First of all, the Committee of Experts' criticism that students entering vocational education were too young and lacked sufficient grounding in general knowledge will cease to exist as compulsory education will be extended by two years. The ten-year universal school will offer in the last two years four streams, of which three are vocationally oriented, namely, the polytechnical, agricultural and commercial

³³ streams. Theoretically the graduates of the poly-technical and agricultural streams will be considered qualified workers. However, it is expected that they will further their education in one of the vocational schools. Since the ten-year universal school will become compulsory in 1990, the planning for the re-organization of vocational education will most likely occur in the 1980's.

³³ _____
Swiecki, op.cit., p.78.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

In 1970, when the pragmatic wing of the United Workers Party (the Communist Party) assumed power, Poland's socio-economic problems came under closer scrutiny. One of the major complaints was that the educational system was not meeting its responsibility in furthering the socio-economic development of the country, let alone providing adequate numbers of well-trained labour for an expanding industry. As we have seen, there were attempts before 1970 at linking education more closely with the requirements of a socialized economy. The school reform of 1961, for example, in order to induce greater numbers of youth into the vocational stream of education, extended primary schooling to eight years and introduced polytechnical subjects in both primary and secondary general education. The curriculum of the eight-year primary school was considerably altered giving priority to science and polytechnical subjects. As a consequence, in grades 5-8 science and polytechnical subjects accounted for 49.2 per cent of the curriculum matter

and humanities for 37.7 per cent. The changes imposed by the Ministry of Education were not only supposed to solve the problem of a shortage of skilled labour but also to develop proletarian solidarity and understanding of the working classes; in short, to introduce the younger generation into the new "socialist culture." Due to the lack of material facilities and trained teachers for polytechnical subjects, and to a bias on the part of both teachers and students against practical knowledge, school authorities only paid lip service to the curricular reforms. As a result the theoreticians' attempt to adapt the primary and secondary general schools' curricula to the Marxian theory of "unity and practice" has not been successful, and polytechnization has become just another subject in the curriculum. One may say that the attempts to superimpose the polytechnical and socialist imprint on a school system which is based on pre-World War II bourgeois educational values, has had no decisive impact on its organizational structure and character.

When it became apparent that the polytechnization of the primary school and the lyceum did not produce

the expected results, the educational authorities decided to channel the majority of primary school leavers into basic and secondary vocational schools. This policy was accomplished by maintaining, on one hand, a demanding entrance examination to the lyceum, and on the other, by not requiring an entrance examination to the basic vocational school. As a result of this policy there was a noticeable decline in the number of students entering the complete secondary schools (lyceum and technikum) and a simultaneous increase in the enrollment at basic vocational schools. It reached the ratio of 4:1 between the vocational schools and the lycea. The policy of directing over 70 per cent of the primary school leavers to vocational schools was further reinforced by a correspondingly higher allotment of scholarships and places in dormitories to the students in the vocational stream. This policy was obviously designed to combat the shortage of qualified labour. The economic expediency of having more qualified youth on the labour market closed the road to upward social mobility to a growing number of primary school graduates who opted for basic vocational education.

In view of the fact that Poland is a socialist state with a planned economy, it is both surprising and ironic that there exists a lack of cooperation and coordination between education and industry. In short, the blame appears to rest with industry, which has a record of ignoring the needs of vocational education. As shown earlier, factory managers are on the whole reluctant to designate their factories' facilities for apprenticeship or training schemes as this allegedly interferes with meeting planned quotas of production. Consequently, students in the vocational stream are often taught on outdated machines in a manner isolated from the current practices of industrial production. Further, principals of vocational schools are not kept apprised of the vocational opportunities in industry. Due to this lack of cooperation large numbers of graduates from the basic vocational schools do not work in their specializations, a trend which has been increasing in some trades (from 30 to 60 per cent of all graduates). These large numbers suggest that investments in vocational education are not producing the desired social and economic benefits.

At the same time, many graduates become frustrated and dissatisfied because they cannot find work in their chosen field.

In spite of the official government statements that education is a "social leveller", Polish society adheres to a social stratification along the lines of education, family background and socio-economic position. The educational system, due to the numerous examinations offered at crucial points in the student's educational career, perpetuates many of the old divisions along traditional lines of class, status and prestige. In other words, the present forms of assessing the learning progress of pupils and students seem to be too exacting for a society striving to universalize secondary education. Highly differentiated structures of the educational system are responsible for creating dividing lines between various types and levels of education, as for instance, between primary and secondary general education and between secondary general and vocational education. The various types of education maintain a very distinct division of social prestige: graduates of the lyceum are regarded as members of

the intelligentsia, and therefore, destined for white collar jobs. Strongly ingrained cultural attitudes of the various social groups play a decisive role in the educational aspirations of youngsters. Professional classes emphasize the necessity of finishing secondary general education because it opens the door to university study. Parents with little education, on the other hand, choose for their children a shorter period of schooling often ending at the primary level. Consequently the upward social mobility of the working classes is not commensurate with the socialist policy of the state.

There are several reasons why the rural youth is under represented at all full secondary schools and universities. The main reason, perhaps, is the glaring discrepancy in educational quality between village and city primary schools. Rural youth, being aware of the educational disparity between village and city primary schools, shows its preference for the basic vocational schools which do not require entrance examinations. Until very recently the basic vocational school was a "blind alley" as far as social mobility was concerned but

nevertheless recruited over 60 per cent of all village primary schools' graduates. At present a graduate of basic vocational school can continue in his specialization in the junior grades of technikum, but there are very few graduates of the basic vocational schools who do so. The village primary school also has a drop-out rate three to six times higher when compared to a similar urban school. The higher drop-out rate results not only in an unnecessary loss of potential talent but hinders the drop-outs in vocational and social advancement. Thus the elimination of some of the primary school pupils (mostly in the rural areas) from further education is not intentional but an inherent part of the educational system. Yet, it is precisely from among the provincial and rural working class and peasantry that the educational authorities seek support in their endeavour to reduce the predominance of the professional classes in education. Efforts are periodically made to encourage children of working classes and peasantry to continue their education. Students of working class and peasant background are given preferential treatment in the awarding of scholarships and dormitory allocations. At university en-

trance examinations students of working class and peasant background receive additional points for their social origin. However, such administrative measures have failed to alter the basic social order in education.

The lyceum is a typical example of a secondary school with strongly ingrained bourgeois values. The school has changed very little from its pre-World War II model, being centred around a classical education with the addition of some science. The lyceum is considered by some to have outlived its social usefulness as it mostly caters (70-80 per cent) to students from professional and white collar backgrounds. Consequently, the social class composition in the general secondary schools, and subsequently, in institutions of higher learning does not correspond to the present class structure of the Polish society at large. The children of professional and white collar background are overly represented in the lyceum and universities. Although only over half of the lyceum's graduates are assured places at university, the school nevertheless is perennially oversubscribed. The risk of not getting

into university does not, on the whole, deter the professional classes from sending their children to the lyceum, even though those who fail the university entrance examination have little or no chance of finding employment in an increasingly technological economy. It would appear that since social status and prestige do not correspond to income levels it is the traditional socio-cultural values that lead a Pole to prefer a classical and humanistic education over a technical and vocational one, thus further frustrating the official goals of industrialization and technological advancement.

The unsatisfactory performance of the village school is of particular concern to the educational authorities as almost half of the entire population still lives in the countryside. Demographic predictions show that due to the steady decline in the urban birth rate 60 per cent of all children will be attending the primary village school in the near future. If the demographic predictions hold true the accelerated industrialization of Poland will, to a large degree, be dependent on the continuous flow of a well-educated and trained labour force from the

villages to the towns and cities. It is most surprising that in view of the economic importance of the village youth, its educational requirements have been neglected by both the local governments and the educational authorities. The village school, due to its organizational weakness (the existence of the incomplete primary school in villages with only grades 1-4 or 1-5), uneven distribution throughout the rural areas, shortage of classrooms, learning and teaching aids, and a shortage of well qualified teaching staff, has been unable to provide the rural youth with a well-grounded eight-year primary education. The poor educational quality of the village primary school is one of the factors which in large measure hinders the village youth in social and vocational advancement. This fact might partly explain why the majority of the graduates of village primary schools have been entering the labour market as unqualified labourers. The problem is magnified, however, by those who did not finish primary school, at which level the pupils are taught civics and the basics of polytechnization. In brief, it is difficult to effect economic modernization and industrialization in a country where, in 1970, every third worker

was without formal vocational education, or where more than half of the 10 million employees working in socialist enterprises had a primary school education only, or had not finished primary school. The lack of vocational education among such large numbers of the labour force has perhaps been the main stumbling block to an increase in productivity and industrial expansion.

The government's 1973 law on universalization of secondary education is intended to correct some of the shortcomings of the present educational system. The law's main objective is the removal of the highly differentiated structures of the present educational system which are blamed for perpetuating the traditional social divisions of class and prestige. The ten-year universal school, according to its proponents, will facilitate the upward social mobility of the working classes. This task might prove difficult, however, as the lack of upward social mobility is felt chiefly among the working classes in the rural areas where there are few economic opportunities. Besides, it is unrealistic to expect the rural class youth to excel academically in an environment that lacks both the tradition of

education and the economic and cultural demands of urban life. Greater upward social mobility of the rural youth may become a viable proposition if the establishment of the ten-year universal school coincides with economic development and urbanization of the countryside in Poland. The establishment of the ten-year universal school alone will not basically alter the existing social conditions of the rural youth unless job opportunities in fields other than farming are created, and urban type housing is provided. Economic development and urbanization of the rural areas would arrest the outflow of talented youth and induce educated people to settle in villages. The improvement of the village education would then be a natural development in a general process of social change in the rural areas.

The notion that the ten-year universal school will stimulate upward social mobility of the working classes is questionable also in other respects. The 1973 school reform proposes that there will be no entrance examination to university. Instead of the Matura examination and the university entrance examination, which at present serve to select the best

students for university, the final selection process will take place in the course of the first-year university studies. Since the reform does not envisage a drastic increase in university places, the result will be fierce competition for a limited number of places perhaps making the cure worse than the disease. This may result in a re-emergence of the traditional pattern of academic selection and, by the same token, social class distinctions. On the other hand, the obligation to finish the ten-year universal school should improve the academic preparation of all those who choose the vocational stream, or of those who will be obliged to settle for vocational education after unsuccessfully attempting to get into university.

The educational problems plaguing a communist country such as Poland are in some respects strikingly similar to those experienced by North American and Western European countries. As with capitalist societies, Poland is challenged by problems of equal educational opportunity, a growing need for well qualified industrial workers and technicians, a shift of an unqualified young labour force from rural areas

to urban centres, and differing standards of education between schools located in rural areas and the cities.

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